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Number

L. Danvers

Hebrews 13 verse 17

H. P. Hyrcastom says, he never read
this text without trembling

There are no more of
the same kind in the world
and it is a pity that
it is not better known.



The Protestant's Prayer-Book :

O R,

STATED AND OCCASIONAL

D E V O T I O N S,

F O R

FAMILIES AND PRIVATE PERSONS,

A N D

D I S C O U R S E S

O N T H E

GIFT, GRACE, AND SPIRIT OF PRAYER;

TOGETHER WITH

E S S A Y S

ON THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH, BAPTISM,
AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

H Y M N S

ADAPTED TO SOCIAL AND SECRET WORSHIP.

By J. M. MOFFATT.

The principal part of family religion is Prayer, every morning, and evening, and reading some portion of Scripture; and this is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God and Religion in the minds of Men, that where it is neglected, I do not see, how any family can in reason be esteemed a family of christians, or indeed have any religion at all.

Archbishop TILLOTSON.

As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord. Josh. xxiv. 15.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Matt. vii. 7.

B R I S T O L :

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1875

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1875

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TO THE
CONGREGATION
OF
PROTESTANT
DISSENTERS,
ASSEMBLING

AT THE PLACE OF PUBLIC WORSHIP,
IN THE FOREST-GREEN, AVENING,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE,

THIS
DEVOTIONAL TREATISE

IS DEDICATED,
BY THEIR AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,
AND SERVANT,
IN THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST,

J. M. MOFFATT.

TO THE

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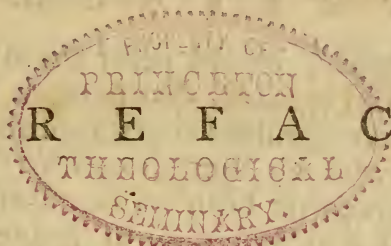
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P R E F A C E.



THE dissertations on the Gift, Grace, and Spirit of Prayer, were compiled with a special view to those members of religious society, who may be requested at certain times, to assist the devotions of their fellow-christians.—The first Chapter, is designed to answer the end of that useful performance, *Mr. Henry's Method of Prayer*, which (the author has been informed) is become scarce. And, tho' the nature of the work would not permit to insert such a number of scriptural expressions under each head, yet, in other respects the variety is greater. 'Tis therefore presumed, that those who have Mr. Henry, may find additional aid from these materials.—Christians will judge for themselves what expressions under the divisions of PRAYER, viz. Invocation, Confession, Petition, &c. are adapted to their particular cases, and confine them to *private use*; and what are more general, and best suited to *social worship*.

The second and third Chapters may be thought *too prolix*—I have only to say, that I herein aimed at the edification of common christians. On the contrary, some may object to *the brevity* of the family prayers.

ers.—In reply, would refer them to page 68, and also remark, that persons of great piety† have signified their approbation of short prayers, in social worship: Indeed, this is agreeable both to our Lord's caution, and that specimen of prayer which he has been pleased to give us in Matt. vi. 9, &c. It may be moreover observed, that it was expedient to be concise, for the sake of those laboring people, who being obliged to go *early* to work, and return home *late*, are apt to plead want of time, as an excuse for the neglect of their duty.—As *the family* prayers are not long, in *the private* have left room for the christian's own enlargement.—The intercessory part of prayer is often introduced into the daily devotions. Intercession with God to bless all mankind with his providential bounties, and enlighten them with his word and Spirit, and to bring them to everlasting happiness, is one of the divinest exercises that the heart of man can be engaged in:† Accordingly *the three first petitions*

† That eminently holy man, Mr. ROBERT BRUCE, was in public prayer, *very short*; and he has been heard to say, that he hath grown weary when others were *long* in this duty. See GILLIES Success of the Gospel, Vol. I. p. 290.

† Intercession for *particular persons* also, is an highly important duty in the christian life. For if you can once sincerely pray for a man, this will lead you to love him, and dispose you to every good office towards him.—“When you feel the risings of resentment, envy, or contempt towards any of your fellow creatures, pray for them. Thus, little ill-natured passions are likely to die away, and that sin of evil speaking prevented, to which some (who make no inconsiderable profession of religion) are nevertheless much given.—The Apostle Paul is a noble example of particular intercession. Phil. i. 4, 5. 2 Tim. i. 3.”

petitions of the Lord's prayer, are in effect petitions for the success of the Gospel, every where.—Frequently to pray for our native country* is a lesson taught us even by Heathens. Morning and evening (says an heathen writer) we pray for the prosperity of Italy.

The

* More especially should we attend to such a duty at this critical juncture, when we seem to be feeling the effects of the divine displeasure, and have reason to fear more awful judgments—*I say more awful judgments.* For tho' there be some who are disposed to impute national calamities to some *hidden cause*, rather than to *national guilt*, and have severely censured the calling those calamities divine judgments, yet we conceive, that we are not chargeable with presumption, for the use of such language; since this is the light in which Scripture leads us to view them. Psalm lxxxix. 31, 32. Jer. ix. 12, 13. It accords with the common apprehensions of mankind: For we are informed, that the Heathen in a season of public distress were accusom'd to offer expiatory sacrifices, to avert the wrath of their Gods. We are further authorized so to express ourselves, seeing the same sins which are said to have brought down the vengeance of Heaven upon the Jews, do appear to prevail in an high degree amongst us—as luxury, Amos vi. 1, &c. oppression, Chap. iv. 1, &c. and contempt of religion, Zeph. i. 12, 13, 14. Ezek. xxii.—Tho' we are not warranted (says the present Bishop of London) to infer from great and signal calamities any great and uncommon wickedness in the sufferers—Yet on the grounds of reason and experience, and from our notions of the wisdom and justice of God, we may be allowed to observe a more equal Providence dispensed in the fates of Kingdoms, than in the affairs of individuals. The cases are widely different, and the same reasons, motives, and ends do not hold in both. Kingdoms and Nations *as such* are Beings of the present world, and they are obnoxious to the judgment of God in this life only; therefore the counsels of God with regard to them may be governed by other rules, and we are warranted to estimate their prosperity and adversity by measures different from those by which we ought to judge of the merits and demerits of private persons.—Now since *prayer* is mentioned in Scripture, as a grand mean for turning away the divine indignation, let every lover of his country be found in the frequent use of it, 2 Chron. vii. 14. Let us fervently pray for the Spirit of God, to advance that national repentance and reformation, without which, solid peace and true prosperity are not to be expected. Prov. xiv. 34.

The Spirit of God, in sacred writ, having furnished us with a variety of doxologies, which are undoubtedly preferable to any of a human stamp, have therefore confined myself to them: And cannot but earnestly wish, on many accounts, that scriptural doxologies were commonly used by christians.

The Essays are such as appeared to the author proper for a family piece.—He has endeavored so to treat these subjects, as not to omit the most material heads of instruction.

The small collection of hymns is added agreeably to the advice of a judicious friend.

Among the pious writers to whom I have been considerably indebted, are *Watts, Jenkins, Scott, and Orton*.

Some may think that in the course of the work I have given unnecessary explanations; but it should be considered that these explanations may be serviceable to persons of the lowest abilities.

Several of the occasional remarks it must be owned are *long*; whether they are *pertinent and useful* is submitted to the judgment of the reader.

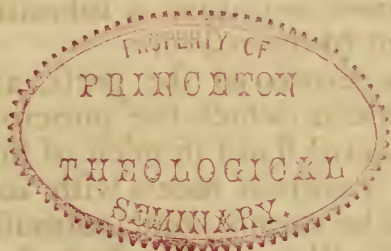
—The errors of the press, and many other defects (which the judicious reader may discern) stand in need of his candor.

If the christian meets with any expression that he cannot conscientiously use, “I trust he will not instantly cast away the
book

book with resentment," but rather *leave out*, or *alter* the expression, as he pleases.—All I ask, all I desire is, that the contents may be received, or rejected, as they are found to accord, or not with the sacred Oracles. "For that wherein all Protestants agree, and which they subscribe as a perfect rule of their faith and actions—is the Bible. The Bible, the Bible only is the religion of Protestants."

I would now request the serious christian to join me in this petition, that God would deign according to the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, to make the following Treatise a means of promoting *personal and family religion* even that "religion which consists of light and love."

N. B. When circumstances require the use of one of the occasional prayers, this mark (†) in the daily prayers, is designed to shew the person, who conducts the service, where such a prayer, or thanksgiving may be most properly introduced.



INTRODUCTION.

CONTAINING OBVIOUS ARGUMENTS FOR PRAYER, AND HINTS RESPECTING THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP—THE MEDIUM—ACCEPTABLE PRAYER—PRAYING ABSOLUTELY, AND CONDITIONALLY—THE SEASONS OF PRAYER—EXTEMPORE PRAYER, AND FORMS—FAMILY PRAYER.

ARGUMENTS AND MOTIVES.

I. **T**HE obligation to prayer has been acknowledged by all the nations of the Earth.—“If one travel the world (saith Plutarch) 'tis possible to find cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without wealth, without coin, without schools and theatres; but a city without a temple, or that useth no worship, prayer, &c. no man ever saw:”—Nay, a sense of this duty is so deeply implanted in the minds of men, that even professed Atheists (in a time of danger and trouble) have had recourse to it. We have a signal instance recorded by Æschilus, the Persian, in his relation of the overthrow of the Persians by the Grecian army. “When (observes he) the Grecian forces hotly pursued us, and we came to the river Strymon, that was frozen, and began to thaw—then, with mine eyes, I saw many of those gallants, whom I had heard before boldly maintain there was no God, every one upon their knees with eyes and hands lifted up, begging earnestly for help and mercy, and entreating that the ice might hold until they got over.”

II. 'Tis a most reasonable duty.—What can be more fit than to adore him who is the Fountain of all excellencies, and infinitely excellent in himself—return thanks to our divine Benefactor for the fa-
vours

vors we have received—acknowledge the sins committed against that Being, who can with the utmost ease inflict immediate punishment; or than to ask for the blessings we need: I say, what can be more reasonable, than that we should thus employ our bodily powers, as well as the faculties of the mind?

III. How frequently are we exhorted to prayer, and how numerous the examples of it in the word of God.—*Thus saith the Lord, call unto me*, Jer. xxxiii. 2, 3. *Watch, and pray*, Mat. xxvi. 41. *Pray for them that despitefully use you*, Chap. v. 44. *Pray without ceasing* (a) 1 Theff. v. 17. Cornelius, a Roman Centurion, *prayed to God alway*, or from day to day, at all the hours of prayer, Acts xi. 2. More especially, we have the example of our divine Master, to enforce this duty.—*He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God*, Luke vi. 12.

IV. Prayer is an excellent means of holiness. For when we engage therein, we are led to behold the eternal Father, and his only begotten Son, in themselves, and in the great and tender relations they sustain with respect to us—to consider our unhappy, and dangerous state thro' sin—to contemplate the celestial felicity, and the boundless ocean of eternity. Now, to have our minds seriously fixed on those all important things, tends, to subdue evil affections, (b) and promote the purification of the heart. As one may say, it puts the soul in a fit posture, 'to receive that sacred fire from above, which consumes our dross—to receive those divine influences, whereby we are formed to a deep reverence of, and an high complacency in God; to a
fervent

(a) That is, pray at all proper seasons.—So the burnt-offering presented every morning and evening is called *perpetual*. Lev. vi. 20. See Doddridge in loc.

(b) If a person be tempted to injustice, impurity, or the like, instantly to pray for assisting grace, is doubtless one of the most powerful means for vanquishing the temptation. See Pref. p. 6. note †.

fervent love of our Father and Redeemer; a proneness to do good to all; an humble and serene temper, the repose of a contented mind; a mind suited to those regions, where nothing but perfect purity, entire devotedness to God, love, benignity, order, and peace shall have place for ever.'—A certain christian upon his death bed observed to a worthy friend, that his natural temper was not the best, and that he had been guilty of many sins. But, saith he, *that place*—pointing to his closet, is a witness to my humble prayers and converse with God, and the pains I have taken, to subdue my temper, and train up myself for that world, to which, I hope thro' grace, I am going. (c)

V. Prayer is efficacious for obtaining good things for ourselves, and others. (d) *Call unto me, and I will answer (e) thee*, Jer. xxxiii. 3. *It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered*, Joel ii. 32. *Ask, and it shall be given you*, Mat. vii. 7. The efficacy of fervent prayer may in a peculiar manner be seen, in those parables of our Lord, Luke xi. 6, &c. Chap. xviii. 1, respecting which, it has been remarked, that our Savior did not intend, in either of them, to represent to his disciples the character and disposition of the supreme Being, but to point out, that

B tho'

(c) 'Tis true indeed, one might use *daily prayer*, acknowledge his sins, and yet not seriously intend to forsake them—implore divine aids, and yet constantly neglect watchfulness, nay, boldly rush into the way of temptation—beg God to forgive him, and yet at the same time refuse to forgive his offending brother.—But, this deserves not the name of prayer. 'Tis only *a mere lip service*, whereas prayer (properly speaking) is *the work of the soul*.

(d) Being obliged to study brevity, would refer the reader to Angel's Prayer-Book—where the efficacy of prayer is largely considered. See p. 18—67.

(e) It may not be amiss to take some notice of the distinction that has been made between God's *answering*, and *accepting prayer*.—When men put up such petitions to God as are good and lawful in themselves, but are not certain that the thing prayed for is fit for them; yet, when they do it with such sincerity and earnestness

tho' God may not see fit immediately to afford his creatures any signal evidences of his regard to their entreaties, he will (if they continue in their duty) answer their prayers in a manner most conducive to their welfare.—The efficacy of prayer suits likewise with experience, Gen. xxxii. 9, 10, &c. Chap. xxxiii. 1, 2, &c. Judges xiii. 8, 9. Isai. xxxviii. 1—6. Acts xii. 5—12. Besides these remarkable answers to prayer recorded in the preceding passages of Scripture, 'twere easy to produce many credible examples of a much later date. But shall only give one instance from the memoirs of Mr. John Janeway—His worthy Father in his last sickness said to him,—O Son, this dying is a solemn business! This passing into eternity is a great thing! And truly, I am under no small fears as to my own state for another world. O that I could say cheerfully—I can die.—The Son made a proper reply, but seeing his dear father still continue under despondings of spirit, he retired, and earnestly begged of God, that he would be pleased to give his father some token for good, that he might joyfully, and honorably leave this world, to go to a better.—After he was risen from his knees, he came down to his sick parent, and asked how he felt himself. The father made no answer for some time, but wept exceedingly. At length

earnestness as is suitable to the nature of the duty, and as christians, in the name of Christ, and with resignation to the will of God—when we so pray, *God approves, and accepts our prayer as an act of piety*, tho' he does not free us from the affliction we desire to have removed, or bestow upon us the favor we have requested, because his infinite wisdom sees that such a thing would not be for our real good.—With respect to God's *answering of prayer*—When our petitions have what is necessary to render them accepted, and God knows that 'twill be consistent with our true interest to grant them, then we are to expect that he will give us the things we have asked, at the most proper time, and in the most proper measure, unless our after conduct renders it meet, and necessary, that the Deity should withhold such blessings from us—God might be said many times to answer prayer in effect, tho' it be not in the manner we have desired by prayer. Thus it was in St. Paul's case. 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9.

length having recovered himself, he burst out into such expressions as these—O Son, now, it is come; it is come; it is come; I bless God, I can die; I know, now, what that sentence means—the *peace of God which passeth understanding*. That fit of weeping in which you saw me, was a fit of love and joy so great, that I could not contain myself, neither can I declare what glorious discoveries God has made of himself to me.—The Son's heart was not a little refresh'd to hear such words, and behold a sight which was so clear an answer of his own prayer, as if God had from Heaven said unto him, thy tears and thy prayers are heard for thy father, thou hast procured the blessing. (f)

VI. The true believer has found prayer to be a delightful employ. It yields a pleasure unspeakably superior to sensual enjoyments. (g) Neither is the pleasure

(f) Notwithstanding 'twould be improper to say, that God may be rendered more favorable in *disposition* to his creatures by any thing they can do; yet, surely he may be rendered more favorable in *act* to them.—And as by our prayers, we may obtain blessings for ourselves from God consistent with his *immutability*, so likewise we may for others: I say, the universal Father in consideration of the humble and benevolent intercessions of some of his children for others, may be frequently pleased in the course of his providence to direct events for the advantage of the persons interceded for, in a manner that would not otherwise have been done. And is not the answering such prayers one proper method of graciously rewarding the benevolence of Beings to one another? Job xlii. 8, 9. Price's Dissertations on Providence, &c. p. 178, 206, &c.—I cannot forbear adding, 'that for any to request the prayers of their friends, when they do not pray for themselves, nor use suitable means to procure the blessings desired, and live in wilful sin, is to be guilty of hypocrisy; not to urge, that they can expect no benefit from the prayers which are put up for them by others.'

(g) The refined pleasures of a pious mind (says Dr. Blair) are in many respects superior to the coarse gratifications of sense.—They are pleasures which belong to the highest powers and best affections of the soul; whereas, the gratifications of sense reside in the lowest region of our nature. To the *one* the soul stoops below its native dignity: The *other* rises it above itself. The *one* leave always a comfortless, often a mortifying remembrance behind them: The *other* are reviewed with approbation and delight.

pleasure of the Philosopher, who most attentively surveys the works of the Universe, to be compared with that of the devout christian holding communion with his God. For (to use the words of an ingenious writer) in studying the laws and order of the creation we converse only with *effects*, with the shadows of wisdom, power and goodness; but in devotion our minds are immediately turned to the *infinite cause* of all, where every faculty within us can have room for the utmost exertion.—To approach God in prayer, in the name of the blessed Mediator—intensely to behold his astonishing Majesty and glorious goodness and grace—to exercise towards him love and gratitude, and to have a sense of being interested in the favor of one, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask, or think—certainly, these are the grand sources of substantial delight and the sublimest joy. To the truth of this many have borne witness; I mean, such who have shewn that they were possessors of the Spirit of real devotion, being evidently filled with the fruits of righteousness and love.* For the encouragement of the young, in particular, that they may seek after the pleasures of devotion, shall make an extract from the life of a very amiable youth—It seems, he used to retire for devotional exercises into the church, or some solitary room. Observing (says the Author) this his practice, I once hid myself, to take notice of the intercourse, that I judged was kept up between him and God. But, O! what a spectacle did I see! surely a man walking with God, and maintaining an holy familiarity with the great Jehovah. Methinks, I see him still. With what a lovely countenance did he walk up and down, his lips going, his body oft reaching up, as if he would have taken his flight to Heaven! Truly, his looks, smiles and every motion spoke him to be on the confines of glory.—If the soul is now so raised, and ravished with this distant, obscure, and imperfect view—what ardors and raptures

* The Duty and Interest, p. 76.

tures shall it feel, when these divine views are near, and there is no interposing cloud—when the brightest glories of God, and all the beauties of the Lamb shall meet the eyes of the Saint.

CONCERNING THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

IN our religious transactions (saith Dr. Watts) we are eminently to look to God the Father, as the person, who is our original Maker, Lord and Sovereign. To him we must pray, and apply ourselves eminently—to him as the first Spring of mercy. †—This is the general current of Scripture language. *When ye pray, say, our Father*, Luke xi. 2. *I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Ephes. iii. 14. *Thro' him, i. e. Christ, we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father.* (h) Chap. ii. 18.

When about to address God in prayer, let the young christian guard against low and unworthy thoughts of him; be very careful not to make any image of the Deity in the mind, as if he were *like unto corruptible man*, Rom. i. 23. But conceive of God as a Spirit; or a Being of no particular form, nor having bodily parts (i) and whom no man hath seen,

† See Watts's Works, Vol. I. p. 500.

(h) Since the above text plainly sets before us the common method of worship, viz. that we are to address the Father as the *object*, thro' the Son as *Mediator*, and by the holy Spirit as the *Assistent*, it may be asked, whether it be not inconsistent with this divine rule, and does not introduce confusion into worship, when a christian praying with others, sometimes addresses the Father, then the Son, and in another part of the same duty addresses the sacred Spirit?—But this by no means forbids the christian at other seasons, and particularly on sacramental occasions, to *call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—to ascribe glory to the Lamb that was slain*. See Acts vii. 59. 1 Cor. i. 2. 2 Epist. xii. 8, 9. Rev. v. 12.

(i) It must be owned, that the Scripture in many places seem to ascribe bodily parts to God; but these expressions are to be understood figuratively; and are made use of in condescension to the weakness of human capacities.—In expressing the several powers of God, and his different manners of acting (saith a judicious writer) all language is so deficient, that we are obliged to have

seen, or can see, John iv. 24. Deut. iv. 15, 16. 1 Tim. vi. 16. an eternal Spirit, 1 Tim. i. 17; whose excellency and greatness the thoughts of angels cannot reach, Neh. ix. 5; every where present, Psalm cxxxix. 7, &c. before whom all things are naked and opened, even the thoughts and intents of the heart, Heb. iv. 12, 13: To whom nothing is impossible, Luke i. 37: Who is all-wise to guide and direct his creatures in circumstances of the utmost difficulty, Prov. iii. 6. A Being of spotless purity, hating iniquity with perfect hatred, Hab. i. 13. Jer. xlv. 4.—One of infinite love, which has most wonderfully displayed itself in the gift of Christ, and eternal life thro' him, 1 John iv. 8, 9, who is
ready

have recourse to comparisons drawn from our own manner of acting, to represent our conceptions of these divine powers: consequently, when the Scripture speaking of God (who being an infinite mind is therefore present every where alike) represents him, *as dwelling in Heaven, and having the Earth for his foot-stool*, this ought to be understood only as a description of his *dominion over all*. When mention is made of the *eyes* of him, this must be understood of his *perfect knowledge* of all things, *His looking down* upon the Earth, signifies not any *posture*, but his *watchful providence* over all events.—When mention is made of his *ear*, and of his *bowing down his ear* towards men, this sets forth his *readiness to regard* the prayers of his servants. *Arms* and *Hands* being in men the instruments of action, and the seat of strength, signify, when *applied* to God, his *power and might*. *Smelling a sweet savor* is nothing but an Hebrew phrase to express God's *acceptance* of the services of his sincere worshippers. And the mention of his *mouth and lips* is a familiar metaphor to signify his *revealing his will* to his servants. Whenever there is any mention made of God, *as in human shape*, we must conclude, that it was only *some angelic being*, who spoke in his name: Or else, that it was our great Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Angel of the Covenant, who then appeared in *a human form* agreeable to what has since taken place, John i. 14.—If the holy Scriptures seem to ascribe to God *affections and commotions*, particularly, representing him, *as grieved*, or *as rejoicing*, we are not to think such expressions signify *the same thing* with what we find in ourselves, and are wont to denote by *those names*. But *the one* may import that the divine Nature takes a most serene complacency in the holiness and happiness of men; and *the other* may signify a calm aversion of will in reference to the sins and miseries of men.

ready by his holy Spirit *to help our infirmities*, Rom. viii. 26, and *not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*, 2 Pet. iii. 9.

OF THE MEDIATOR.

There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. ii. 5. *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*, 1 John ii. 1. *Whatsoever ye do in word, or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him*, Colos. iii. 17.

Let us attend a little to the dignity of this Mediator: Even the High-Priest under the law, when he entered once a year into the Holy of Holies, to burn incense, and sprinkle the blood of the sacrifices before the mercy-seat, as a mean to deliver the Jewish nation from temporal evils, and that they might enjoy the privilege of approaching to God in the solemnities of his Temple-worship.—I say, the High-Priest, when officiating on this occasion was certainly a most venerable object.—Philo, speaks of him as transformed into somewhat more than man. But, how mean does he appear, if compared with *Jesus, Jesus the only begotten Son of God*, John iii. 16, *who is able to subdue all things unto himself*, Phil. iii. 21. *In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Colos. ii. 3. *By whom God the Father created all things*, John i. 3. Ephes. iii. 9; and in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, Colos. i. 19. Between whom and the Father there subsists a mysterious union, John xiv. 9, 10, 11. And who shall hereafter come to judge the world upon a great white throne, from whose majestic face *the Heavens and the Earth fly away*, Rev. xx. 11.—Such an one is Jesus, the Mediator, the High-Priest of our profession, *who by his own precious blood entered into the holy place, and sits at the right hand of God*, Heb. ix. 12. Colos. iii. 1. *There he inter-*
cedes

cedes (*k*) from age to age, not merely for a single nation, but for *all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues*, Rev. vii. 9, &c. and obtains for those who sincerely *come unto God by him*, a deliverance from the second death, and an abode in that celestial Kingdom, where dwell righteousness and blessedness for ever. Heb. vii. 25.

In the name of this glorious and gracious Mediator, we are always to present our prayers and praises to God, Ephes. v. 20. On the merits of his righteousness, death and intercession, we should rely with humble and thankful hearts, as the appointed method

(*k*) The *very appearance* of Christ in Heaven, as a lamb that had been slain, Rev. vi. 6. may be properly called a *virtual intercession*. But, besides this, he may be supposed to *pray* or *plead* for us. Yet, it deserves notice, saith Mr. Orton (with a little variation) that the design of *Christ's intercession* is not to remind God, as if he were forgetful; or to move and persuade him, as if he were unkind: This would be entertaining dishonorable thoughts indeed of our heavenly Father—I much dislike, and am even shocked at those expressions of some divines—‘the blood of Christ being sprinkled on the burning throne, and turning the wrath to grace.’—‘Of its calming the frowning face of God.’—‘Prevailing on him to lay by his thunder and fury.’—This is by no means a scriptural representation of the case, but directly contrary to the general tenor of the Gospel. For tho’ God be spoken of as *a consuming fire* to the workers of iniquity, he was *rich in mercy*, always disposed to shew favors to returning sinners. His throne was a throne of grace, a mercy-seat before the blood of Christ was sprinkled upon it, Exod. xxxiv. 6. Isai. lv. 7. *Fury* was not in him, Chap. xxvii. 4. But in order to dispense his mercy in a way honorable to his government, and to preserve upon our minds a sense of his spotless holiness, and utter abhorrence of sin; he appointed his Son to die, and to act as our Intercessor. Thus, the mercy of God was the *cause*, and not the *effect* of Christ’s death, John iii. 16.—Please to turn to p. 259, note (*a*).

* Many readers will recollect that these expressions are to be found in the hymns of the eminently pious Dr. Watts; expressions, which perhaps he would afterwards have alter’d, if health, and time had permitted: For a late Writer tells us, that he has good authority for saying, that the Doctor, in the latter part of life, ardently wished to revise both his psalms and hymns, in order to render them wholly unexceptionable to every christian professor. See Williams’s Prelim. Dis. to the Book of Psalms, page 6.

method for attaining the divine acceptance, Ephes. i. 6, and the eye of faith should behold him in *every part* of the duty, and not just at *the beginning*, or *conclusion* of prayer.—To assist us in this respect, we are advised *often* to mention his name in our addresses to a throne of grace, and *importunately* to plead that dear and worthy name with the Father of mercies.—O let us charge our souls to keep in perpetual remembrance *Jesus Christ*, who hath so loved us, as to lay down his life for our sakes, Rom. v. 6, and thro' whom his disciples receive benefits infinitely valuable, Chap. vi. 23.

OF ACCEPTABLE PRAYER. †

IT is said that *the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*, Prov. xv. 8. From hence some have argued, that such as are in an unregenerate state, are not to be put upon prayer, because, whilst in such a state, nothing that is done by them can be *acceptable* to God. But, this kind of talk is plainly owing to a neglect of some parts of Scripture which occasions the misinterpreting (*l*) of others. If he who is wicked, intends to continue in his wickedness, without doubt his prayer must be an abomination: As it is an insolent attempt to impose upon an all-seeing, almighty God. But, if the wicked man under a serious sense of the evil of his ways, &c. seeks to God for grace to renew and change his heart and

c

life,

† See page 86.

(*l*) Since the texts that follow are connected with the present subject, and plain christians appear sometimes to mistake their import, permit me in a few words to explain them.—Isai. lxxv. 1. *I am found of them that sought me not.* The prophet here foretels the calling of the Gentiles, who while they remained such did not inquire after God: But then he expressly tells us in the preceding words,—*I am sought of them that asked not for me.* As if he had said, I am now sought of a people, that sought me not before I revealed myself to them in the Gospel dispensation. So that this passage of Scripture gives not the least encouragement to those, who live under the sound of the Gospel, to expect

life, such prayer is far from being offensive to the merciful Jehovah,† Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 37.—Simon Magus, tho' St. Peter tells him that he was *in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity*, or one of the worst of men, is by this same inspired Apostle exhorted to *pray*, Acts viii. 22, 23.—We read of Ahab the king of Israel, that he *sold himself to work wickedness*; yet, when he heard the divine threatenings, and humbled himself before the Lord, God so far regarded his present humiliation and prayer, as to declare that he would not bring the evil in his days, 1 Kings xxi. 25, &c.

These few observations may serve to encourage the awakened sinner earnestly to address God by prayer, and to hope that Christ will intercede for him, and (as a pious Writer expresses it) perfume his first cries for mercy, and so render them acceptable to the Father.

OF PRAYING ABSOLUTELY AND CONDITIONALLY.*

WE may pray *absolutely* for the assistance of the holy Spirit; for the gift of repentance, faith, and purity of nature; for the increase of national righteousness, and the spread of the Gospel among all nations, because these are petitions which we know to be according to the will of God, Luke xi. 13. Mark vi. 12. Ephes. vi. 23. 1 Thes. iv. 3. Matt. vi. 10. Therefore, some good people seem to fall into

pest to find God, while they refuse to seek him by prayer, and in the use of other means.

James iv. 3. *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss.*—What you ask in prayer, is with a view to your present pleasure, and not that you may be more instrumental in glorifying God, and that your spiritual interest may be advanced; therefore your requests are not answered.

Chap. i. 6. *Ask in faith nothing wavering.*—To believe that God can, and will do good to us, and grant every thing that is necessary, and not doubting concerning the accomplishment of the divine promises made by Jesus Christ.—*This* is properly that faith which should be joined with our prayers.

† Wright on Regeneration. * See page 44.

into an error, who when praying for the advancement of virtue and piety, express themselves to this effect—‘if it be agreeable to thy will let thy creatures become holy’—Whereas we have seen that the sanctification of the creature is a thing perfectly agreeable to the declared will of God: Consequently, tho’ multitudes remain unholy, shall we impute it to any defect in the divine goodness and love? Rather, are we not instructed to impute it to the obstinacy of the creature, Psalm lxxxi. 13. Matt. xxiii. 37—the want of improving such talents as the divine Being has been pleased to give, Chap. xxv. 15, &c. Rom. i. 20—the wilful neglect of some of the means of grace (*m*) in the use of which God is wont to bestow the purifying influences of his Spirit; or else the attending on those means in an indifferent and careless way, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. 1 Tim. iv. 8?

Particular outward comforts for ourselves, friends and relations, and what is generally understood by the term national prosperity—are things that should be prayed for *conditionally*, viz. That God would bestow them if he knows it to be for the best. For these worldly enjoyments in certain circumstances may be hurtful to us and others.—We should also take heed to our words when we pray for the afflicted—We are not at all events to request a speedy deliverance from sufferings, but to beg that the affliction may be productive of spiritual advantage, and then, if it be good in the sight of the only wise God, that he would in due time remove it, &c.

THE

(*m*) By the means of grace, we of course understand not only private prayer and public worship, but also attentively reading the word in secret, John v. 39, keeping the heart, Prov. iv. 23, watchfulness against evil company, and places of temptation, Chap. i. 15, seeking the society of the pious for the purpose of religious conversation, Chap. xiii. 20, serious reflection, Psalm cxix. 59, striving against all sin, Isaiah i. 16, endeavoring to comply with every call of duty, ver. 17, and persevering in these things, Matt. xv. 22, &c. in humble dependance on the aids of the holy Spirit, Prov. i. 23.

THE SEASON OF PRAYER.

THE *stated seasons* for the performance of this duty are *morning and evening*.—The incense, or fragrant perfumes burned upon the golden altar in the Jewish Temple, at these particular seasons, Exod. xxx. 7, 8, was (we may suppose) designed to be a representation of *morning and evening prayer*. In this light it was considered by the devout Jews, for at such times we are informed they offered up their prayers.—Have noted under a preceding head the practice of our blessed Lord, Mark i. 35. Luke vi. 12.—Truly nature itself, I mean the returns of day and night point out to us the duty of *morning and evening prayer*. Accordingly Plato writes “That at the rising both of the Sun and Moon, one might every where behold the Greeks and Barbarians, those in prosperity, as well as those under calamities and afflictions, prostrating themselves, and hear their supplications.”

OF FORMS AND EXTEMPORE PRAYER.

WHERE there is but a small degree of religious knowledge, or bashfulness in the temper, or a want of readiness in the utterance, or if a person labors under some bodily disorder—in these, and similar circumstances, forms may be very helpful.—Many an holy soul (says Dr. Watts) has found its inward powers awakened, and excited to lively religion in the use of a form, where the wants and wishes of the heart have been happily expressed; and considering the various infirmities that surround human nature, even the wisest and best of men may be glad of these assistances at some seasons.

But, tho’ the advantage of forms of prayer be admitted, yet wholly to confine ourselves to them, without ever attempting alterations, or additions, may be attended with several inconveniences. A

learned

learned and pious Bishop long since observed, that for any one to sit down, and satisfy himself with his prayer-book, and to go no further—this were to remain in his infancy, and not to grow up in his new nature.—It hath been also remarked, that confinement to set forms renders us more especially liable to coldness and formality in divine worship—that 'tis impossible any form should take in the variety of cases of christians at different times, and answer every emergency—that a christian is restrained by the words of a form so as not to give himself the liberty of expressing his own devout breathings towards God, whatever holy elevation of soul he may feel within himself. For *these and other reasons* that may be mentioned, we cannot but approve of extempore prayer⁽ⁿ⁾ in public as well as private, if the person who prays is furnished with abilities for performing it in a proper manner.—Indeed, tho' the Church of England hath an established form, yet it so far countenances free prayer, as to allow every clergyman to introduce a prayer of his own composing before sermon.

OF FAMILY PRAYER.

WHATEVER relation Providence brings a person into, he is bound to serve God in that relation. Therefore every one who becomes the head of a family, should jointly pray with his household to that God, who is the Founder of all the families of the Earth.—Again, seeing 'tis highly incumbent upon such to strive to promote the eternal salvation of children, servants, &c. Gen. xviii. 19. Ephes. vi. 4.—Thus without doubt, among other things, they should pray

(n) “ By extempore prayer, we would be understood to mean not *raw and undigested matter*, but such as is the effect of premeditation, sometimes assisted by the Spirit of God, whereby the mind is prepared, and put into a devotional frame, and the memory awakened, to furnish or indite language suitable to express the same, tho' not reduced to any limited precise form.”

pray together, or else where is the prospect of success. (o)—To set up the worship of God in a family is the way for the divine blessing to descend upon temporal concerns; and may be the means of obtaining the special protection of Heaven, in a season of imminent danger and general calamity. A worthy Divine makes mention of a most remarkable providence to this purpose,—In the year 1584 there was an earthquake, in Switzerland, by which a mountain was thrown down, and it fell upon a village that stood under it, and destroyed every house, and the inhabitants, except the half of one house, where the master of the family was (with his wife and children) earnestly praying to God.

If any placed by Providence in the superior ranks of life, should cast an eye on these pages, I would fain request their particular attention to this momentous point.—Should gentlemen (says Mr. Law) think it too low an employment for their state and dignity to exercise such a devotion as this for their servants, let them consider how far they are from the Spirit of Christ, who made himself not only an Intercessor, but a sacrifice for the whole race of mankind.—Let them consider, how miserable their greatness would be, if the Son of God should think it

(o) Not only those servants, who belong to the family, but also such as labor for us occasionally, should be permitted to join with us in prayer. Neither should Masters be unmindful of the religious interests of such servants, who tho' not domestics, yet are employed in work-shops near their dwellings.—This is particularly the case in clothing-countries.—What excellent advantages have these gentlemen from their situation, authority, &c. for admonishing their people with respect to such vices, as drunkenness, filthy conversation, cursing, swearing, sabbath-breaking, &c. to which even the aged laborers are frequently given; and hereby not only plunge themselves into misery, but also dreadfully corrupt the youth.—Those Masters who make a profession of religion, and yet are negligent of this duty, must contract no small degree of guilt: Whereas *others* who exert themselves in this respect, adorn their christian character, and are pursuing a conduct that may prove friendly to their temporal welfare.

it as much below him, to pray for them, as they do to pray for their fellow-creatures.—Let them likewise be pleased to reflect, that where persons in their elevated situation pay a strict regard to the sabbath, (avoiding unnecessary travelling, visiting, &c.) and daily practise family religion, their example may be exceedingly useful to those around.—To one who looks towards a future world, and considers how much the happiness, or misery of individuals when dead and gone may be increased, according as others are influenced to tread in good, or evil paths by the remembrance of their example,—the thought is very striking.

—Heads of families should carefully watch against every thing that would dishonor the duties of family religion; as harsh words, unkind actions, and transgressing the bounds of temperance, 1 Pet. iii. 7.

—Do not satisfy yourselves, Sirs, with praying in your families but *once a day*—“Where this unworthy custom prevails, it is generally the evening that is allotted for worship. But, if there is then need to commit ourselves to the protection of divine Providence amidst the darkness and insensibility of the night, there is certainly equal reason to offer our acknowledgments for it in the morning, and still greater need to commit ourselves to the care of the grace of God to preserve us from the snares and temptations of the day; since the danger to which our souls are exposed by these, is far more important than that to which our bodies are liable in the night; and the Scripture seems to lay a greater stress upon the worship of the morning than that of the evening, Psalm v. 3. lix. 16. and lxxxviii. 13.”*

—Yield not to that sinful shame, Mark viii. 38, which may tempt you to omit this duty, when strangers happen to be present. Mr. Fuller tells us, that he had once a person of quality lodged with him, and out of excess of modesty, he forebore family duty that night: on which he makes a penitential

* See Mr. Reader's sermon on family religion.

tential reflection, and forms solemn resolutions and vows, never to be guilty of the like again.—It ought to be remembered, that a stedfast adherence to our duty at such a time, may have a good effect upon the conduct of our guests, when they return to their own houses.

—If the Master of the family be absent the mistress (unless a more proper person be present) should discharge this part of duty.

—As family prayer should be performed in the morning before the hurry of worldly business comes on, so domestics should be called together for evening worship before they grow dull and sleepy.—On this account, if circumstances will admit, 'tis advisable not to sup 'till after prayer.

—Having gone thro' the proposed hints, shall conclude the introduction with earnestly entreating every reader vigorously to pursue the interest of the soul, for *this is the one thing needful*—"needful to our true peace in life, needful to our comfort when death makes his speedy approach—needful to our bliss beyond the grave—needful millions of ages hence—needful thro' eternity, and in the present neglect of which everlasting ruin inevitably follows." What a *grand, absolute, infinite necessity* then, is this care of the soul, which consists in the hearty belief, and serious practice of the great things of religion.†

CHAP-

† See p. 253. &c.—286, &c. of this Treatise.

E R R A T A.

Page 25. line 16. dele *the*.—p. 30. l. 33. for *follow* read *folly*.
 p. 44. l. 23. dele *we*.—p. 52. l. 22. for *suits* read *sins*.—
 p. 63. l. 20. for *aimiable* read *amiable*.—p. 71. l. 11. for
comm it to memorall read *commit to memory all*.—p. 97. l. 14.
 for *Spir t* read *Spirit*.—p. 103. l. 21. for *primitive* read *private*.—
 p. 124. l. 21. dele *of*.—p. 150. l. 11. for *is* read
are.—p. 209. l. 15. for *possible* read *possibly*.—p. 240.
 l. 9. a comma to be after *way*.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Gift of PRAYER.

THE gift of prayer may be thus described. It is an ability to suit our thoughts to all the various parts and designs of this duty, and a readiness to express those thoughts before God, in the fittest manner, to profit ourselves, and others who join with us.

It is called a gift, partly because it was bestowed on the Apostles and primitive Christians in an immediate, and extraordinary manner by the Spirit of God; and partly because there is the ordinary assistance of the Spirit required even to the attainment of this ability to pray. In the first propagation of the Gospel it pleased the Spirit of God, to bestow various abilities on believers, and these were called the gifts of the Spirit. 1 Cor. xii. 4, 8, 9. Such were the gifts of preaching, of psalmody, that is, of making and singing of psalms, of speaking several tongues, &c. Now tho' these were given to men at once, in an extraordinary way then, and the habits wrought in them by immediate divine power made them capable of exerting the several acts proper thereto on just occasions, yet these powers of preaching, of speaking several tongues, of psalmody, &c. are now to be obtained by human diligence, with due dependance on the concurring blessing of God. And the same must be said concerning the gift or faculty of prayer.*

“Prayer,

* See Watts, Vol. III, p. 123.

“ Prayer, is a word of an extensive sense in Scripture, and includes not only a petition for mercies, but it is taken for the address of a creature on Earth to God in Heaven, about every thing that concerns his God, his neighbour or himself, in this world, or the world to come.—”

The chief parts of prayer are these eight, viz. INVOCATION, ADORATION, CONFESSION, PETITION, PLEADING, SELF-RESIGNATION, THANKSGIVING, and BLESSING ; all which are contained in this short verse,

“ Call upon God, adore, confess;

“ Petition, plead, and then declare

“ You are the LORD’s ; give thanks and bless,

“ And let Amen conclude the prayer.”

S E C T I O N I.

INVOCATION.

“ **I** NVOCATION is a calling upon God, or beginning to speak to him by some of his most holy names, or titles;” such as, *O Lord, my God.* (a) *Most high and most holy God and Father.* (b) *O God of Israel that dwellest between the cherubim.** (c) *Almighty God and everlasting King.* (d) *Our Father who art in Heaven.* (e) *O God who keepest covenant with thy servants.* (f)

S E C T I O N II.

ADORATION.

“ **T** O adore God, is to think highly of him, and to speak humbly to him of the high esteem which we have of his nature, and works.”

I. Ado-

(a) 1 Kings viii. 28. (b) Psal. lvii. 2. (c) 2 Kings xix. 15. (d) Gen. xvii. 1. Jer. x. 10. (e) Mat. vi. 9. (f) 1 Kings viii. 23.

* This expression refers to the Schechinah, or miraculous light (designed as a token of God’s special presence) which sat between the cherubim over the mercy-seat, &c.

I. Adoration paid to God on the account of his nature, consists in making mention of some of the attributes or perfections of his nature, such as his glorious and amiable majesty and blessedness, his eternity, immutability, omnipresence, omniscience, sovereignty, almighty power, wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, goodness and mercy. Having mentioned these divine perfections, we must acknowledge, that there is none to be compared with God; that he is infinitely above us and all other beings; that he is incomprehensible, so that when we have said all we can of his glorious attributes, we fall infinitely short of the merit of the subject.

I shall give some instances of all these in scripture language.

First, If we adore the glorious and amiable majesty of God, we do it in this manner.

O Lord our God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majesty; who coverest thyself with light, as with a garment. (a)

God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (b)

God is love. (c)

Thou art the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; and from whom cometh down, every good and perfect gift. (d)

Secondly, If we adore God for that blessedness which he has of and from himself, we say,

Thou art the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. (e)

Thirdly, If we adore God's eternity and immutability, or unchangeableness, we say,

Thou art the King eternal, immortal, invisible. (f)

Thou only hast immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see. (g)

Before

(a) Psal. civ. 1, 2. (b) 1 John i. 5. (c) chap. iv. 16.
(d) James i. 17. (e) 1 Tim. vi. 15. (f) 1 Tim. i. 17. (g) chap. vi. 16.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the Earth and the World; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. (h)

Thou art the Lord, and changeſt not; therefore we are not conſumed. (i)

The ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever. (k)

Fourthly, If we adore God as omnipreſent, that is, preſent in all places, we ſay,

Whither ſhall we go from thy Spirit? Or whither ſhall we flee from thy preſence? If we aſcend up into Heaven, thou art there: if we make our bed in Hell (or in the depths of the Earth) behold thou art there. If we take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the Sea; even there ſhall thy hand lead us, and thy right hand ſhall hold us, that we can; not poſſibly eſcape thee. (l)

Thou art a God at hand, and a God aſar off. (m)

Thou art not far from every one of us; for in thee we live, and move, and have our being. (n)

Fifthly, If we adore the omniſcience of God, by which we mean his perfect knowledge of all perſons, and things, we may do it thus,

O Lord thou haſt ſearched us, and known us: Thou knoweſt our down-ſitting, and up-riſing, thou underſandeſt our thoughts aſar off. Thou compaſſeſt our path, and our lying down, and art acquainted with all our ways. There is not a word in the tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knoweſt it altogether. (o)

Thou ſearcheſt the heart, and trieſt the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. (p)

All things are naked, and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do; even the thoughts and intents of the heart. (q)

Sixthly,

(h) Pſal. xc. 2. (i) Mal. iii. 6. (k) Heb. xiii. 8. (l) Pſal. cxxxix. 7, 8, 9, 10. (m) Jer. xxiii. 23. (n) Acts xvii. 27, 28 (o) Pſal. cxxxix. 1, 2, 3, 4. (p) Jer. xvii. 10. (q) Heb. v. 12, 13.

Sixthly, If we adore God's sovereignty, or acknowledge that he is the Owner, and absolute Lord of all, we do it in this manner,

The Heaven, even the Heavens are thine, and all the host of them. The Earth is thine, and the fulness thereof; the World, and they that dwell therein. The Sea is thine, and thou madest it; and thy hands formed the dry land. Every beast of the forest is thine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. (r)

In thy hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind (s)

Thou dost according to thy will in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the Earth, and none can stay thy hand, or say unto thee, what dost thou? or why dost thou so?

Seventhly, If we adore the power of God, we say,
We know, O God, that thou canst do every thing. (u)
Power belongeth unto thee. (v)

With thee nothing is impossible. (w)

Thou killest, and thou makest alive; thou woundest, and thou healest; neither is there any that can deliver out of thy hands. (x)

Thou art able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. (y)

Eighthly, If we adore the wisdom of God, we say,
Thine understanding, O Lord, is infinite. (z)

Thou art wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. (a)

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all. (b)

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (c)

Thou art the only wise God. (d)

Ninthly,

(r) Pſal. cxv. 16. xxxiii. 6. xxiv. 1. xcv. 5. 1. 10. (s) Job xii. 10. (t) Dan iv. 35. (u) Job xlii. 2. (v) Pſal. lxii. 11. (w) Luke i. 37. (x) Deut. xxxii. 39. (y) Ephes. iii. 20. (z) Pſal. cxlvii. 5. (a) Iſa. xxviii. 29. (b) Pſal. civ. 24. (c) Rom. xi. 33. (d) 1 Tim. i. 17.

Ninthly, If we adore the unspotted holiness of God, we do it in this manner,

Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. (e)

Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity. (f)

Thou art holy in all thy works, and holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever. (g)

Thou art glorious in holiness. (h)

Tenthly, If we adore God, as that just one, who in the administration of his government, never did, nor ever will do wrong to any of his creatures, we say

Righteous art thou, O Lord, when we plead with thee; and wilt be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest. (i)

Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity. (k)

O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous; excellent in judgment, and in plenty of justice. (l)

Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. (m)

Eleventhly, If we adore the truth, the goodness, and mercy of God, we may do it in this manner,

Thy truth endureth to all generations. (n)

Thou art the true God, who cannot lye. (o)

Thou art good, and thy mercy endureth for ever. (p)

Thou hast proclaimed thy name, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. (q)

Thou art good, and doest good; good to all, and thy tender mercies are over all thy works: but, truly God is in a special manner good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. (r)

How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! (s)

(e) Pſal. xxii. 3. (f) Hab. i. 13. (g) Pſal. cxlv. 17. xciii. 5.
(h) Exod. xv. 11. (i) Jer. xii. 1. Pſal. li. 4. (k) Job xxxiv. 10.
(l) Ezra ix. 15. Job xxxvii. 23. (m) Rev. xv. 3. (n) Pſal. c. 5.
(o) Jer. x. 10. Tit. i. 2. (p) Pſal. cxxxvi. 1. (q) Exod. xxxiv.
5, 6, 7. (r) Pſal. cxix. 98. cxlv. 9. lxxiii. 1. (s) Pſal. xxxvi. 7.

Twelfthly, If we adore God as one whose perfections are matchless, and who is infinitely above all creatures, we say,

Who in the Heaven can be compared to the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? (t)

Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works. For thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone. (u)

All nations before thee are as a drop of a bucket, and as the small dust of the balance, behold, thou takest up the isles as a very little thing. All nations before thee are as nothing, and they are counted to thee less than nothing, and vanity. (v)

Lastly, If we adore God as a Being incomprehensible in his nature and attributes, we may do it thus,

Who by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection? (w)

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. (x)

Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can shew forth all his praise? (y)

Thou art exalted above all blessing and praise. (z)

II. To adore God on the account of his works, is, to speak honourably of him, because of his works of creation, providence, and grace.

I shall give some instances of this also in scripture language.

If we adore God for his works of creation, we say,
Thou, even thou art Lord alone, thou hast made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens with all their host, the Earth and all things that are therein, the Seas, and all that is therein. (a)

We

(t) Pals. lxxxix. 6. (u) Psal. lxxxvi. 8, 10. (v) Isa. xl. 15. 17. (w) Job. xi. 7. (x) Psal. cxlv. 3. (y) Psal. cvi. 2. (z) Nehem. ix. 5. (a) Nehem. ix. 6.

We worship him who *spake, and it was done*; who *commanded, and it stood fast*; who *said, let there be light, and there was light.* (b)

Thou hast made the sun to rule by day, and the moon and stars to rule by night: Thou hast set all the borders of the earth; thou hast made summer and winter. (c)

Thou didst form man at first of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (d)

Thou O God, madest us, and not we ourselves. (e)

Thou didst make every thing very good. (f)

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour, and glory, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure, for thy praise they are, and were created. (g)

Secondly, If we adore God for his works of providence, we say,

The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. (h)

Thou art the Most High, who ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. (i)

A sparrow falls not to the ground without thy permission. (k)

Thou art he who took me out of the womb; thou didst keep me in safety, when I was upon my mother's breast. The God who fed me all my life long unto this day, and redeem'd me from evil. (l)

Thou upholdest all things by the word of thy power; and by thee all things consist (are supported). Thy kingdom ruleth over all. (m)

Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigns,—and hath prepared his throne in the Heavens,—before whom the Seraphim cover their faces.* (n)

(b) Pſal. xxxiii. 9. Gen. i. 3. (c) Pſal. cxxxvi. 8, 9. lxxiv. 17. (d) Gen. ii. 7. (e) Pſal. c. 3. (f) Gen. i. 31. (g) Rev. iv. 11. (h) Pſal. cxlv. 15. (i) Dan. iv. 25. (k) Mat. x. 29. (l) Pſal. xxii. 9. Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. (m) Heb. i. 3. Colloſ. i. 17. Pſ. ciii. 19. (n) Rev. xix. 6. Pſal. ciii. 19. Iſa. vi. 2.

* i. e. Let the Lord be praised.

Thirdly, If we adore God for the works of his grace, we say, Glory to God in the highest Heavens, for peace on Earth, yea good-will, towards men. (o)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ. (p)

We would join with the whole creation in saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. (q)

Here it may be proper to mention the name of Christ, who is the only Mediator betwixt God and man, in and thro' whom alone we are brought nigh to God, and can expect to be heard and answered. —On this occasion we may express ourselves in the following manner,—*We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies in thy beloved Son. (r)*

Thou hast commanded us whatsoever we do in word or deed, to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus: O that our present spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise may be acceptable to God by Christ. (s)

We approach thee in and thro' that great high Priest who is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. (t)

We look up to thy throne of grace thro' a Mediator who is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (u)

S E C T.

C

(o) Luke ii. 14. (p) Ephes. i. 3. (q) Rev. v. 12.
 (r) Dan. ix. 18. (s) Col. iii. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 5. (t) Heb. ix.
 24. (u) Heb. vii. 25.

SECTION III.

CONFESSION.

“**C**ONFESSION, is an acknowledgment, that we are not only mean and inconsiderable creatures, in the sight of our Maker, but that we are also sinners, that our nature is corrupt, that we are chargeable with actual transgressions, that our iniquities are numerous and aggravated, and that therefore we deserve to be deprived of every blessing, and to be punished by the great and just God, &c.”

I. We may confess our meanness as creatures, in such scriptural expressions as these:

Man is like to vanity. His breath is in his nostrils: and wherein is he to be accounted of. (v)

What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man that thou visitest him (w). Even with the riches of thy grace in Christ Jesus.

Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? (x)

Will God in very deed dwell with man on the earth? with man that is a worm, and the son of man which is a worm? (y)

O let not the Lord be angry, now I, who am but dust and ashes, take upon me to speak unto the Lord. (z)

II. Having acknowledged our meanness as creatures, we may confess the corruption or depravity of human nature; and our obnoxiousness to death, in consequence of our relation to Adam the first transgressor.

All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (a)

All the world is become guilty before God. (b)

There is none righteous, no not one. (c)

By

(v) Psal. cxliv. 4. Isai. ii. 22. (w) Psal. viii. 4. (x) 2 Sam. vii. 18. (y) 2 Chron. vi. 18. Job xxv. 6. (z) Gen. xviii. 27. 30. (a) Rom. iii. 23. (b) Ver. 19. (c) Ver. 10.

By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (d)

III. We may descend to particulars, and humbly confess before God the corruption of the several faculties of our souls.—For example, the blindness of our understandings.

The understanding is darkened with respect to spiritual objects. (e)

Next we may confess the perverseness of our wills. ---We are *like the deaf adder, that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely. (f)*

How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof? And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers. (g)

We have that *carnal mind which is enmity against God. (h)*

We may also acknowledge what is amiss in our passions and affections, that these are placed upon things mean and perishing, to the neglect of objects inconceivably great and everlasting.

We have been full of care about *what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed*; but have not sought with earnestness *the kingdom of God, and that righteousness which is necessary to our being accepted of him. (i)*

We have *looked at* (been eagerly pursuing) *the things that are seen, which are temporal*, but have been very unmindful of *the things that are not seen, which are eternal. (k)*

Of the Rock that begat us we have been unmindful, and have forgotten God that formed us. (l)*

We

(d) Rom. v. 12. (e) Ephes iv. 18. (f) Psal. lviii. 4. 5. (g) Prov. v. 12. 13. (h) Rom. viii. 7. (i) Mat. vi. 31. 33. (k) 2 Cor. iv. 18. (l) Deut xxxii 18.

* God may be stiled a *Rock* to denote that he is always the same, and therefore at all times a sure refuge.

*We have forsaken God the fountain of living waters, for cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. **

We have served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. (m)

IV. When we have acknowledged our natural corruption, we are humbly to confess before God our actual transgressions.

These might be distinguished into sins of omission, or the duties we have neglected, and sins of commission, or our breaches of Jehovah's holy law, in thought, word, and deed.

1. We may confess our sins of omission in such scriptural expressions as these :

We have left undone those things which we ought to have done. (n)

We have been as fig-trees planted in thy vineyard, and thou hast come year after year seeking fruit from us, and hast found none; therefore we might have justly been cut down for cumbering the ground. (o)

We have hid our Lord's money, not so much as attempting an improvement of our talents, and therefore deserve the doom of the wicked, and slothful servant. (p)

We have been unfaithful stewards, who have wasted our Lord's goods. (q)

We may here be more particular, || in acknowledging the duties wherein we have failed, towards God, and likewise towards our fellow-creatures.----If we consider God, not only as a Being possessed of all conceivable excellencies in the highest perfection, but

(m) Jer. ii. 13. * The various uncertain enjoyments of this world—Rom. i. 25. (n) Mat. xxiii. 23. (o) Luke xiii. 6, 7. (p) Mat. xxv. 18, 26. (q) Luke xvi. 1.

|| A particular confession of past sins, (says one) even of those which we have reason to hope are forgiven, may be very useful; in order to promote and maintain humility, caution and watchfulness; to keep our conscience tender, and increase our activity in religion for the future, in this view it is recommended in scripture. Ezek. xvi. 61, 63.

but likewise as our almighty creator, constant preserver, unerring teacher, and greatest benefactor, we shall see, that we have been wanting in our behaviour towards him in various respects. For instance, we shall be convinced that we have not loved, and revered him as his august and amiable perfections require—that our thankfulness and gratitude for the many mercies he has freely bestowed upon us, hath been very defective—that we have not read with attention, and studied God's holy word as we might have done---that we have leaned to our own understandings, and not asked for divine wisdom to guide us; have been confident of our own strength, so as to slight the holy Spirit, and have made light of Christ the appointed Saviour, 2 Cor. iii. 5. Mat. xxii. 5.---that we have neglected certain divine ordinances, particularly the Lord's supper, without being concern'd for that neglect--have been wanting in point of seriousness, when we have spoken of God in our common discourse----have not embraced several of those stated, and occasional opportunities for divine worship, with which we have been favoured-----when we have engag'd in religious exercises, it has been without that awful solemnity, and deep humility which became us; neither have we delighted ourselves in the Lord our God, nor shewn a zeal for the advancement of his glory in the world.

Besides the above duties, which more immediately respect God, there are a great variety owing to our fellow-creatures, which we have either wholly neglected, or performed them carelessly, and by halves.

Parents by a serious survey of their conduct, may see cause sufficient humbly to acknowledge, that they have not instructed, and chastised their children, nor prayed with them as they ought.

Children may confess, that they have not given due honor to their parents, nor express'd a becoming
thank-

thankfulness for the benefits they have received from them.

Husbands---That they have not manifested that tenderness towards their wives, which might have been reasonably expected; nor diligently endeavoured to promote their eternal interest.

Wives---That they have been wanting in point of affection, and respectful behaviour towards their husbands.

Masters---That they have been negligent in governing, reproofing, rewarding, and giving religious instructions to their servants, as each case required.

Servants---That they have been slothful in their business.

Superiors---That they have been far from doing good according to their abilities.

Inferiors---That they have not paid reverence and honour to whom they are due.

Magistrates---That they have not as became them encouraged by precept, and example that which is good, nor discountenanced, and opposed that which is evil.

Subjects---That they have not rendered to their Ruler the tribute which he justly claims.

Ministers---That they have failed to give proper reproofs and exhortations in private, and been defective also in their public work.

Hearers---That they have not prayed for ministers, &c.

The young should confess their folly in not attending to the good counsels of the aged.

The aged should lament it before God, that they have not been more grave in their carriage, and profitable in their conversation, when youth have stood before them.

To close, We are to acknowledge (as far as we can recollect) the duties we have omitted, whether towards friends or enemies, neighbours or distant acquaintance, the distressed and afflicted in body or mind. 1 John iii. 17. *Isaiah* lviii. 7.

2. After we have acknowledged the duties we have omitted, we are to confess the sins we have committed.

In general thus---*We have done deeds that ought not to be done.* (r)

Father I have sinned against heaven, and before thee. (s)

Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight. (t)

We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly. (u)

We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws which he set before us, but we have transgressed thy law, by departing from thee. (v)

1. But to proceed to particulars: We may confess before God our sinful thoughts, in the following scriptural language:

From within, out of our hearts, have proceeded evil thoughts. (w)

Amongst the rest, our thoughts of vanity and pride call for lamentation.

Oh, *how long have vain thoughts lodged within us!* (x)
How have our hearts dwelt upon thoughts which are trifling and foolish! Pride hath swollen our breasts. We have *thought of ourselves more highly than we ought*; have been apt *to despise our poor neighbour, and have not walked humbly with our God.* (y)

We have *sacrificed unto our nets, and burned incense unto our drags,* (z) imputed our prosperity to our own power and wisdom, instead of humbly and thankfully acknowledging the hand of God therein.

We have *sought our own glory, more than the glory of God.* (a)

We have been puffed up with pride, and have eagerly sought opportunities to gratify it; notwithstanding

(r) Gen. xx. 9. (s) Luke xv. 18. (t) Ps. li. 4. (u) 2 Chron. vi. 37. (v) Dan. ix. 10, 11. (w) Mark vii. 21. (x) Jer. iv. 14. (y) Rom. xii. 3. Prov. xiv. 21. Mic. vi. 8. (z) Hab. i. 16. (a) Prov. xxv. 27. 1 Cor. x. 31.

ing we have read in thy word, that *every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord.* (b)

Rash anger and passion have raged within. We have had *no rule over our own spirits*: have been angry with our brother without a just cause. (c)

We have been soon angry, and *anger hath rested in our bosoms.* (d)

*The Sun has gone down** upon our wrath; hereby we have given place to the devil. (e) Given him an advantage against us.

Our covetousness, discontent, and sensuality.

Our hearts have inclined to covetousness. (f)

We have been guilty of that *covetousness which is idolatry.* (g) Paid that regard to the things of the world which is due to God alone.

We have not been *contented with such things as we have.* (h)

We have *minde*d the things of the flesh more than the things of the spirit. (i)

We have been *lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.* (k)

Our unmindfulness of the changes we are liable to in this world.

We have *put far away the evil day*, and in our prosperity have said, *we shall never be moved.* (l)

We have made gold our hope, or have said to fine gold, *thou art our confidence*; have trusted in uncertain riches more than in the living God. (m) Our

(b) 1 Cor. v. 2. Prov. xvi. 5. (c) Chap. xxv. 28. Mat. v. 22. (d) Prov. xiv. 17. Eccles. vii. 9. (e) Eph. iv. 26, 27. (f) Ps. cxix. 36. (g) Colos. iii. 5. (h) Heb. xiii. 5. (i) Rom. viii. 5. (k) 2 Tim. iii. 4. (l) Amos vi. 3. Psalm xxx. 6. (m) Job xxxi. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 17.

* "It has been said of the followers of Pythagoras, that if the members of their particular society had any difference with each other, they always used to give tokens of reconciliation before the Sun went down.—Were family prayers constantly practised morning and evening, it might have an happy tendency to keep persons (who have differed) from going to sleep in anger."

Our Envy and Malice :

We were *envious*, when we saw the prosperity of others. (n)

We have had *bitter envying and strife* in our hearts (o) even towards our christian brethren.

We have been *living in malice and envy; hateful and hating one another* : Have *rejoiced* when our enemy hath fallen. (p)

Our impatience under afflictions, and contempt of divine corrections.

When *thou hast chastised us*, tho' it has been *less than our iniquities deserve*, yet our hearts have fretted against the Lord. (q)

We have either *despised the chastening of the Lord*, or *fainted* when we have been rebuked of him. (r)

2. We may next confess before God our sinful words.

In the multitude of our words there wanteth not sin. (s)

Our tongues have been *unruly*, and we have greatly *offended* in our words. (t)

We have spoken many idle unprofitable words —irreverent, proud, flattering, lying, impure speeches, &c.

3. We are likewise to confess our evil actions.

We have *broken the law*, and *dishonoured God* by our wicked actions. (u)

We humbly acknowledge our *evil ways*, and our *doings that were not good.* (v)----Such as intemperance, dishonesty, quarrelsome behaviour, wantonness, or the like.

4. Professors should with sorrow acknowledge their lukewarmness, spiritual sloth, and departure from the paths of holiness.

We have not been *fervent in spirit*, *serving the Lord*; but indifferent and slothful. (w)

D

The

(n) Psalm lxxiii. 3. (o) James iii. 14. (p) Tit. iii. 3. Prov. xxiv. 17. (q) Jer. xxxi. 18. Ezr. ix. 13. Prov. xix. 3. (r) Heb. xii. 5. (s) Prov. x. 19. (t) James iii. 8. Ver. 2. (u) Rom. ii. 23. (v) Ezek. xxxvi. 31. (w) Rom. xii. 11.

The things which remain are ready to die; and our works have not been found perfect; but very defective before God. (x)

We have been *lukewarm, neither cold nor hot*, even where the cause justly demanded our warmest zeal. (y)

We have *lost* the fervour of our *first love*, and do come short of our *first works*; we are indeed in a backsliding and declining state. (z)

Our *goodness* hath been *as a morning cloud, and as the early dew*, which soon goeth away. (a)

There is in us *an evil heart of unbelief*, which inclines us to *depart from the living God*. (b)

V. We are moreover to make mention of the great evil that there is in sin.—The malignity of its nature, and its folly.

Our sin, which is entirely opposite to thine *holy just and good commandment*, is *exceeding sinful*. (c)

O God, *thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee*. (d)

Foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee. (e)

We were *foolish* in being *disobedient*, and in *serving divers lusts and pleasures*. (f)

The unprofitableness and deceitfulness of sin.

I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not. (g)

We have been hardened thro' the deceitfulness of sin (h) —or by its guileful arts.

The pride of our hearts in particular *hath deceived* us, (i)—by promising us safety, whilst it exposed us to utter ruin.

The vast injury sin has done to our souls, and the offence it has given to a God of unspotted purity, and infinite majesty.

In

(x) Rev. iii. 2. (y) Ver. 16. (z) Rev. ii. 4, 5. (a) Hosea vi. 4. (b) Heb. iii. 12. (c) Rom. vii. 12, 13. (d) Psalm lxi. 5. (e) Pf. lxxiii. 22. (f) Tit. iii. 3. (g) Job xxxiii. 27. (h) Heb. iii. 13. (i) Obad. ver. 3.

In sinning against thee we have wronged our own souls. (k)

Our own wickedness hath corrected us, and our backslidings have reprov'd us; it is an evil thing and bitter, that we have forsaken the Lord our God. (l)

We have provoked the holy one of Israel to anger most bitterly. (m)

We have magnified ourselves, exalted our voices, and have lifted up rebellious hands even against the Almighty. (n)

VI. We are to acknowledge the number of our sins, and to confess the various circumstances which have increased their guilt.

Our transgressions have been multiplied. (o)

Who can understand his errors? (p)

Mine iniquities are more than the hairs of mine head. (q)

In many things we offend all. (r)

Our own hearts condemn us of manifold evils; but oh how vast the multitude that are seen by that God, who is infinitely greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things. (s)

Our sins have been attended with several circumstances of aggravation.

Knowledge has aggravated our guilt.

Thou hast written to us the great things of thy law, but we have accounted them as a strange thing, (t) —disregarded them.

We have known our Lord's will, but have not done according to his will, and therefore deserve to be beaten with many stripes: Whilst we have taught others, we have not taught ourselves. (u)

We have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of our God; and yet have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds of duty. (w)

D 2

We

(k) Prov. viii. 36. (l) Jer. ii. 19. (m) Isa. i. 4. Hosea xii. 14. (n) Jer. xlviii. 26. 2 Kings xix. 22. (o) Job xxxv. 6. (p) Psalm xix. 12. (q) xl. 12. (r) Jam. iii. 2. (s) 1 John iii. 20. (t) Hof. viii. 12. (u) Luke xii. 47. Rom. ii. 21. (w) Jer. v. 5.

We have *known the judgment of God, that they who do such things are worthy of death, yet we have not only done the same, but have taken pleasure in those that do them: chosen them for our intimate companions.* (x)

The warnings we have received from the word of God, from our fellow-creatures, and the admonitions of conscience which we have treated with neglect, are further aggravations of our iniquity.

Jehovah hath *called, and we have refused, he hath stretched out his hand, and we have not regarded; but we have set at nought all his counsel, and would none of his reproof; therefore he might justly laugh at our calamity, and mock when our fear cometh.* (y)

Thou hast *sent to us, saying, O do not this abominable thing that I hate, but we have not hearkened, nor inclined our ear to turn from our wickedness.* (z)

We have been *often reproved by God and man, and our own consciences, and yet have hardened our necks, and refused to be guided by good counsels.* (a)

Continuing in sin, when we have been under afflictions for it, has aggravated our guilt.

Thou hast *stricken us, but we have not grieved; we have made our faces harder than a rock, and have refused to return.* (b)

When *some have been overthrown, we were as a firebrand pluck'd out of the burning,* yet have we not returned unto thee O Lord.* (c)

Thou hast *chastened us with the stripes of the children of men* (corrected us mildly like a father) *yet we have not turned, neither sought the Lord of hosts.* (d)

Our crimes are greatly aggravated as committed against divine love and mercy, the wonderful grace of the gospel.

We

(x) Rom. i. 32. (y) Prov. i. 24, 25, 26. (z) Jer. xliv. 4, 5. (a) Prov. xxix. 1. (b) Jer. v. 3. (c) Amos iv. 11. (d) 2 Sam. vii. 14. Isaiah ix. 13.

* "A proverbial expression used, to signify a narrow escape out of great danger."

We have *not rendered again, according to the benefit done unto us, but have ill requited the Lord, as a foolish people and unwise.* (e)

Thou hast *nourished, and brought us up as children, but we have rebelled against thee.* (f)

We have sinned, notwithstanding we have heard of the astonishing love of God to our perishing world, in giving his only begotten Son, to be the Redeemer of it. (g)

We wilfully *transgressed the commandment of the Lord, after we had learnt from the holy scriptures, that Jesus Christ, who was in the form of God,—took upon himself the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that he might put away sin.* (h) Thus, O Lord, our rebellion has been aggravated by the vilest ingratitude.

Our sin has been attended with another circumstance of aggravation; it has been committed, after God has been moving by his Spirit on our minds, in secret, and when under public ordinances.

The Spirit of Jehovah has *striven with us; urged us to an immediate consideration of our latter end, but we have resisted him.* (i)

We have *rebelled and vexed the holy Spirit of God.* (k)

The guilt of our iniquity has perhaps been still more increased by being committed against promises of reformation in an hour of distress, or even against solemn covenant engagements and a strict profession of religion.

We have said *we would not transgress, we would not offend any more, if our God would help us in the season of trouble; yet when we received deliverance, we turned again to sin and folly.* (l)

We

(e) 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. Deut. xxxii. 6. (f) Isaiah i. 2.
(g) John iii. 16. (h) 1 Sam. xv. 24. Philip. ii. 6, 7, 8.
Heb ix. 26. (i) Gen. vi. 3. Deut. xxxii. 29. Acts vii. 51.
(k) Isaiah lxiii. 10. (l) Jer. ii. 20. Job xxxiv. 31. Psal.
lxxxv. 8.

We have not performed the words of the covenant which we made before thee, but as treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously, yea very treacherously. (m)

We have dishonoured that worthy name by which we are called, and given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, (n)—to despise his holy law.

We have named the name of Christ, solemnly professed his religion, and yet have not departed from iniquity. (o)

VII. After the above confessions, we must profess our shame and sorrow for our iniquities, and humbly own our desert of punishment.

O our God, we are ashamed, and blush to lift up our faces to thee, our God. (p)

O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, because we have sinned against thee. (q)

Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. (r)

Oh that mine head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for my transgressions. (s)

Thou mightest justly punish us by taking away thine wool and thy flax in the time thereof, and thy corn and thy wine in the season thereof. (t)

Thou mayest feed us with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, and put into our hands the cup of trembling. (u)

Thou mightest justly swear in thy wrath, that we should not enter into thy rest. (w)

It were righteous in God to cut us off with swift destruction, yea to condemn us to the blackness of darkness for ever. (x)

VIII. We

(m) Jer. xxxiv. 18. Isaiah xxiv. 16. (n) James ii. 7.
 2 Sam. xii. 14. (o) 2 Tim. ii. 19. (p) Ezra ix. 6. (q) Dan.
 ix. 8. (r) Job xl. 4. xlii. 6. (s) Jer. ix. 1. (t) Hof. ii. 9.
 (u) 1 Kings xxii. 27. Isaiah li. 22, 23. (w) Psal. xcv. 11.
 (x) 2 Pet. ii. 1. Jude ver. 13.

VIII. We must acknowledge the admirable patience of Jehovah exercised towards us, and his readiness to be reconciled to the returning sinner.

O the riches of the goodness, and patience, and forbearance of God; how long-suffering is he to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (y)

Sentence against our evil works has not been executed speedily; but thou hast given us space to repent; O that this goodness of God might lead us to repentance. (z)

*Surely the long-suffering of the Lord tends to salvation; therefore will we rend our hearts, and not our garments * only, and turn to the Lord our God. (a)*

With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plentiful redemption. (b)

Thou hast said, and confirmed it with an oath, that thou hast no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from their way and live. (c)

Thou hast indeed said, return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings: behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. (d)

APPENDIX to the above SECTION.

SHALL introduce here the advice given by Doctor WRIGHT (in an excellent little treatise of being born again) to the serious reader, for the discovering the sins of his past life, in order to an humble confession of them before God.

Set down (says that pious writer) and think over the sins of *childhood* and *youth*. And take as distinct an account, as you can, of your miscarriages when
at

(y) Rom. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9. (z) Eccl. viii. 11. Rev. ii. 21. (a) 2 Pet. iii. 15. Joel ii. 13. (b) Psalm cxxx. 7. (c) Ezek. xxxiii. 11. (d) Jer. iii. 22.

* Rending of the garments was amongst the Jews an outward token of great inward grief.

at home with your parents ; and afterwards, when you were *sent out* for business, or education, into the world.

Think of the *several places* you have liv'd in, and what your sins have been in each of those.

If you are so far advanced in the world, as to have families of your own, think of your faults in a *relative capacity* : What sins you have been guilty of against *wife* or *husband*, against *children* or *servants*.

And so, likewise, think of your sins against those you may have dealt with in a way of *trade* ; or conversed with in a way of *friendship* ; or those you should have help'd in a way of *charity*.

Take an account of the sins of your *tempers*, and *constitutions*.

Then mark down those that arise from your calling, † and condition.*

Especially take care to find out that, which is, most strictly speaking, your *own iniquity* (the sin to which you have been most addicted ;) and where, in any instance, this has broke out in such a manner, as to leave uneasy impressions upon your mind, be sure to take an account of all such acts of wickedness. Let

† Every calling has its temptations : In the various ways of commerce, there are deceitful arts which an upright man observes and abhors : Some callings expose to more temptations than others ; so that without circumspection and care, men are undone in the way of their callings. Some engage persons in such a throng of business, that from one rising of the sun to another, they never seriously remember God or their souls. 'Tis therefore a point of great wisdom in the choice of a calling, to consider what is least liable to temptations, and affords more freedom of regarding our spiritual state ; for the body is not the intire man, and the present life is not his only duration.

* Pride, luxury, security, and an ungrateful forgetfulness of God generally grow in prosperity. And the contrary state of poverty, has its peculiar temptations : Discontent, and the use of unlawful means to obtain what they want and desire, is the sin of the poor. 'Twas therefore Agur's wife prayer, " Give me neither poverty nor riches, &c. *Prov.* xxx. 8. See Bates's works, p. 371."

Let the *ten commandments* be set before you, when you are making this inquisition: And set down the several sins which you apprehend you have been guilty of, in *doing* what is *forbidden*, or *neglecting* what is *required* under each command.

After this, think of the *circumstances* which have aggravated your sins.*

WITH A VIEW TO YOUR PRIVATE DEVOTIONS, AND TO ASSIST YOU FURTHER IN THE WORK OF SELF-EXAMINATION, PERMIT ME TO PRESENT YOU WITH THE FOLLOWING PARTICULARS:

SINS AGAINST GOD.

THERE is the sin of swearing, and taking the name of God in vain. *Exod. xx. 7. James v. 12.*

Profaning the sabbath, by spending that time idly, or in the common business, or carnal pleasure, which God has appointed for public and private worship. *Exod. xx. 8. Isai. lviii. 13.*

Laughing at any persons, or jeering them because they are the ministers or people of God. *2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.*

Making a jest of the word of God, or preaching, or prayer, or any part of religion. *Ezek. xxii. 26. 31.*——Quoting scripture in our common discourse, and applying it to a trivial purpose, (which some are chargeable with,—without any evil intention) is the way to lessen our reverence for the bible, and may encourage others to go greater lengths.

SINS AGAINST MAN.

THAT of despising parents, teachers, or rulers in our hearts, or reproaching them with our tongues. *Prov. xv. 5, 20. Chap. xxx. 17. Jude ver. 8.*

Disobedience to their just commands. *Collos. iii. 20. Rom. xiii. 1.* Ob-

E

* See p. 21, &c.

Obstinacy and stubbornness against their reproofs and corrections. Deut. xxi. 18, 21. Prov. xxix. 1.

Boasting over others, on the account of any thing we possess beyond them. 1 Cor. iv. 7.

Conceitedness, always contradicting what others say, and thus treating our fellow-creatures as tho' we were an higher rank of beings than they. Prov. xxvi. 12. 2 Pet. ii. 10.

A disdainful and scornful carriage towards others, particularly towards the aged, servants, and the poor. Levit. xix. 32. Ephes. vi. 9. James ii. 6. Prov. xix. 29.

Mocking or scoffing at persons for what is their calamity, and not their fault, whether it be at the poor, the blind, the lame, &c. Prov. xvii. 5. 1 Cor. iv. 7.

Fretful and passionate expressions. Prov. iv. 24. Chap. xv. 1.

Railing and calling ill names. Mat. v. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

Quarrelling and fighting. James iv. 1.

Curfing and wishing mischief to befall others. Psalm cix. 17.

Revenge, or doing evil to our fellow-creatures, for some real or supposed injury, they have done us. Rom. xii. 19. Mat. vi. 15.

Sullenness, which if continued long grows into settled malice and hatred. Ephes. iv. 31, 32. 1 John iii. 15.

Injustice in its various kinds.—For instance, stealing from another, or taking any thing away privately that belongs to him. Exod. xx. 15.

Robbery, or taking away by force what belongs to another. Levit. xix. 13.

Cheating others of their right by cunning, or deceit, or oppression. Levit. xix. 13. Psalm v. 6. Levit. xxv. 14.

Not paying what is due, or not performing what is promised. Psal. xxxvii. 21. Rom. xiii. 7, 8.

Ano-

Another sin against our neighbour is lying, or speaking that for a truth, which we know to be false. Prov. vi. 16, 17. Rev. xxi. 8.

Flattering mankind in order to obtain their favour. Psal. xii. 3. Jude ver. 16.

Evil speaking, or telling any evil stories of our neighbour, even tho' they be true, and taking away his good name, when we are not called to it by the providence of God. Tit. iii. 2. 1 Cor. vi. 10.

Slandering, or speaking some evil concerning another which is not true. Psal. l. 20, 21, 22.

The sin of cruelty, which consists in putting any creature to pain, or grief without necessity, or in taking pleasure to see others in misery, or refusing to relieve them when it is in our power. Gen. xlix. 7. Lament. iii. 33. Chap. i. 21. 1 John iii. 17.

Spitefulness, which manifests itself in vexatious speeches, teasing the spirits of those who are about us, or in doing mischievous actions. Psal. x. 14. Prov. xxiv. 2.

Uncharitableness, i. e. when we cannot have good thoughts of other persons, nor wish them well, nor speak well of them, unless they be of our own opinion, or party. When this relates to parties in matters of religion, it is often called bigotry.—The uncharitable man views the conduct of his neighbour in a very unfavourable light, and so espies an *evil*, where the eye of charity discerns a *good*, or however an *innocent* intention. Rom. xiv. 3. 10. Mat. vii. 1. 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

SINS WHICH CHIEFLY RELATE TO OURSELVES.

FOR example, acting contrary to our consciences, i. e. speaking or doing any thing which we know or apprehend to be unlawful. Rom. xiv. 5. 22. 2 Cor. i. 12. Prov. xviii. 14.

Intemperance, viz. eating or drinking so much as is hurtful to the body, or disorders the mind,

and unfits us for our duty. Prov. xxiii. 20, 21. Luke xxi. 34. 1 Cor. vi. 10.

Wantonneſs, which conſiſts in lewd and immodeſt words, or actions, and indulging unclean thoughts and deſires Rom. xiii. 13. Ephes. v. 3, 4, 5, 6. 2 Tim. ii. 22.

Another ſin we may mention is delight in evil company, which diſcovers itſelf in a readineſs to follow the inticements of ſuch perſons, and in continuing among them willingly, and without neceſſity. Prov. xiii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 33.

Waſting time by exceſſive ſleep, or by fauntring about and doing nothing. Prov. xxiv. 30. 33. 34. Mat. xxv. 26, 30.—By buſying ourſelves often in that which can turn to no manner of advantage, neither as proper work nor as proper recreation. Ephes. v. 15, 16, 17.—*By continuing longer in our diſverſions than is neceſſary to reſreſh us, and prepare us better for the ſerious employments of life. Prov. xxi. 17. 2 Tim. iii. 4.

The laſt ſin which relates particularly to ourſelves, is, thoughtleſſneſs of the moſt important things to come, ſuch as death, judgment, heaven and hell. Deut. xxxii. 29.

Doctor WATTS at the cloſe of a piece entitled a preſervative from ſin and folly (from which I have extracted the above) remarks that there are certain follies of youth, which the ſcriptures do not expoſe in a particular way, yet there are ſeveral hints ſcattered up and down in the word of God to correct, and guard againſt them. For the ſake of my young readers, and the aſſiſtance of ſome who may be often near them, ſhall cite a part of his obſervations,

* It is another of the miſchievous effects of this trifling humour, that when the proper hour is come for any duty, they have often ſome very needleſs thing to do firſt, or ſome duty which ſhould have been done long before; and thus they are plunged into many inconveniences. Prov. xxvii. 1.

tions. These (I would suppose) will not be esteemed wholly unsuitable to the work before us.

They are comprehended under the following heads :

1. A humourfome temper, viz. a great fondness for inconsiderable things, or a great dislike to them, but still without reason:—Now our desires and dislikes ought to be governed by reason, and not given up to fancy, which hath no rule nor bounds.

2. Peevishness, that is, an uneasy temper and carriage to those who are about us, where there is no just cause for it.

Reason against this vice. We shall hereby give perpetual vexation to ourselves, and be unbeloved by our fellow-creatures.

3. Impatience, as when we are fretful under sickness—or fall into a passion against one who crosses our wills—or vex ourselves if things do not happen just according to our wishes—when we fret with eagerness to possess what we desire, and are violently angry with them who delay it.

Reason against this vice. Impatience under pain or sickness looks like finding fault with God. Besides, it will hinder the recovery of health, and often increase the distemper.——Impatience of opposition should be guarded against, because the opinion of another may be wiser, or his will may be better than ours.—Impatience under disappointments should not be encouraged, since we may afterwards see that these disappointments are for our good.—Impatience of delay should not be allow'd, for it will many times make us angry with inferiors without cause, when we imagine they do not make what haste they can to serve us ; or angry with our superiors, who may know what is fit for us better than we do, and when to give it.

4. Selfishness, which consists in being so entirely wrapped up in serving and pleasing ourselves, that we take no care to serve and please our neighbours.

Reason

Reason against this vice. Such are in danger of becoming churlish, hard-hearted, and covetous.

5. Uncleanliness, which relates to the person and dress.

Reason against it. Uncleanliness is injurious to the health, and renders our company offensive to others.

Note. In this matter some young persons are ready to run into the contrary extreme, of which they should be also warned. They are foolishly nice in their meats, drink, apparel, and every thing that belongs to them; and hereby create much trouble to themselves, and those around them.—There is a medium which we call decency, on this we should endeavour to hit, for our own practice, and for an example to youth.

6. Heedlessness, that is when we take little thought about what we do, or when we give but little attention to what is said to us.

Reasons against this fault. Heedlessness would carry youth into many a mistake and danger: Besides, if they are heedless, they will neither grow wise nor good; for they will give small attention to instructions at home, and to sermons at church.

7. Rashness, a temper that inclines us to speak very improper things on a sudden, without due regard to the occasion or the company; or to make hasty vows and promises, and thus bring ourselves into many difficulties; or that leads youth to venture upon bold actions, without any good end, and thereby expose themselves to many hazards of their life or limbs.

Reason against this follow. God has given us the power of thinking, on purpose to direct our words and actions; and therefore we ought neither to speak nor act without consideration.

8. Fickleness, as when we are soon weary of what we were very fond of before; perpetually changing our desires and purposes, so that we can stick to nothing

thing long, but always want something new.——
This temper should be opposed, as it hinders the young person in the pursuit of knowledge, neither will friends know how to trust a creature, who is ever given to change.

9. Profuseness or lavishness, as when youth squander away much money upon trifles.

Reasons against profuseness. It is a waste of the good things which the providence of God bestows upon us : renders us incapable of supplying the real wants of others ; and leads to gaming, poverty and ruin.

10. A talkative humour, when we tell all that we see, or hear, or know, in any place or company, without guard or fear.

Reason against this folly. Such great talkers are in danger of becoming tale-bearers ; they will talk over in public the private concerns of their own and other families ; will tell one person what another says of him, and thus do a deal of mischief in the world.—Great talkers are often admonished in scripture, as well as tale-bearers. Prov. xiv. 23. Eccles. x. 12, 13, 14. Prov. xx. 3. 1 Tim. v. 13. Levit. xix. 16. Prov. xi. 13. Chap. xxvi. 20. Chap. xvi. 21.

S E C T I O N IV.

PETITION.

“ **P**ETITION, includes in it a desire of deliverance from evil, which is called *deprecation*, and a request of good things, which by some is called *comprecation*.”

I. The evils we pray to be delivered from, are spiritual, temporal, or eternal.

1. We are (for instance) earnestly to beg of God to take away the guilt of our sins, *according to his*
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abundant mercy, in and through Jesus Christ our Saviour. (e)

Be thou merciful to our unrighteousness, and our sins and our iniquities do thou remember no more. (f)

Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. (g)

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. (h)

Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously. (i)

Justify us freely by thy grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. (k)

2. We are to pray to God to assist us by his holy Spirit, against the power of iniquity, and to help us to resist the temptations of our spiritual adversaries, the flesh, the world, and the devil.

Keep back thy servants from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over us. (l)

May not sin reign in our mortal body, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof: O give us thy spirit, to mortify the deeds of the body. (m)

Let our old man (corrupt nature, evil inclinations) be crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we may not serve sin. (n)

Suffer us not to be drawn away of our own lust, (the lust of our hearts) and enticed to sin. (o)

With respect to temptations from without, we pray, *that we might be delivered from the snares of this present evil world. (p)*

Instead of walking according to the course of this world, may we oppose its corrupt customs and evil works. (q)

Enable us to resist the devil, in such a manner, that he may flee from us. (r)

May

(e) 1 Pet. i. 3. Tit. iii. 6. (f) Heb. viii. 12. (g) Psal. cxliii. 2. (h) Psal. li. 9. (i) Hos. xiv. 2. (k) Rom. iii. 24. (l) Psal. xix. 13. (m) Rom. vi. 12. Chap. viii. 13. (n) Chap. vi. 6. (o) Jam. i. 14. (p) Gal. i. 4. (q) Ephes. ii. 2. John vii. 7. (r) James iv. 7.

May the blessed Spirit assist us in *putting on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* (s)

Let no temptation take us, but such as is common to man; and with the temptation make a way for us to escape. (t)

3. The other evils we are to pray against, are, that temporal, and more especially that everlasting punishment, our sins have deserved.

Do not in thy wrath afflict us with *hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and want of all things.* (u)

Rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. (w)

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me. (x)

May we not be hurt of the second death. (y)

We beseech thee good Lord to save us from that state of condemnation and woe *where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* (z)

II. Having earnestly desired God to deliver us from evil, we are to address him, for the following spiritual, temporal, and eternal blessings.

1. We are to pray for the sanctification of our nature.

Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. (a)

May we be *born again, of that incorruptible seed, the word of God; born of the Spirit.* (b)

Help us to *put on the new man, which after (the image of) God is created in righteousness and true holiness.* (c)

2. We may proceed to particulars, and entreat of God to sanctify, or make holy the several faculties of the soul.

The

F

(s) Ephes. vi. 11. (t) 1 Cor. x. 13. (u) Deut. xxviii. 48.

(w) Psal. vi. 1. (x) Psal. li. 11. (y) Rev. ii. 11. (z) Mark

ix. 44. (a) Psal. li. 10. (b) 1 Pet. i. 23. John iii. 5.

(c) Ephes. iv. 24.

The understanding.—*Open thou our eyes, (the eyes of the mind) that we may behold wonderful things out of thy law and gospel. (d)*

May our blinded minds, become light in the Lord. (e)

Give us a spiritual discerning of the things of God; render us wise to that which is good. (f)

Enlighten the eyes of our understanding in such manner, that sin may appear to us as the worst of evils—that we may see the great impurity of our nature, and our danger by iniquity—that we may discern the beauties of holiness—that we may be deeply convinced of the vanity of the world, and know what are the glorious riches of the heavenly inheritance; and that we may be sensible of the transcendent excellencies of our God and Saviour—know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, so as may be life eternal to us. (g)

May not our knowledge consist of some faint ineffectual notions of religion, but grant us that knowledge of divine things, which shall impress and change our minds; thus may we be taught of God; and under the influence of the spirit of truth, be guided into all truth. (h)

The conscience.—Renew our consciences: awaken them, that they may faithfully warn us of sin, and urge us on to the diligent discharge of every duty.

May our consciences from time to time rightly perform their office, in accusing or excusing us. (i)

O do thou cleanse our consciences by the blood of Christ, from the defilement of dead sinful works, that we may serve thee the living God with acceptance. (k)

The will and affections.—Put within us a new spirit. (l)

Beget

(d) Psal. cxix. 18. (e) 2 Cor. iv. 4. Ephes. v. 8. (f) 1 Cor. ii. 14. 11. Rom. xvi. 19. (g) Ephes. i. 18. John xvii. 3. (h) Chap. vi. 45. Chap. xvi. 13. (i) Rom. ii. 15. (k) Heb. ix. 14. (l) Ezek. 36. 26.

Beget in our wills a dislike to every evil way; form them to an entire obedience to the commands of thy word, and may they quietly yield to the disposals of thy providence. May we be no longer the *servants of sin*, but *delight to do thy will*, O God; to this end, do thou *write thy law in our inward parts*. (m)

Make this the language of our hearts on all occasions---*The will of the Lord be done*. (n)

Cause us to *hate vain thoughts*; but *thy law* may we *love*. (o)

Help us to *set our affections* more on things above, than on things on the earth. (p)

The memory.---May our memories be strengthened, to retain that which is good. May we *give an earnest heed to the things which we hear*, and *keep in memory what is preached to us*. (q)

Enable us to *remember thy commandments*, to do them: May the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom. (r)

The whole frame of our nature. The very God of peace sanctify us wholly; and we pray God our whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (s)

3. We are next to pray for the holiness of our lives: this might be done in the following comprehensive expressions.

May we *do justly*, *love mercy*, and *walk humbly with our God*. (t)

As he who hath called us is holy, so may we be *holy in the whole of our conversation*. (u)

May we exercise ourselves in that pure and undefiled religion before [or in the presence of] God even the Father, which consists in *visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction*, and in *keeping ourselves unspotted from the evil practices of the world*. (w)

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(m) Rom. vi. 17. Psal. xl. 8. Jer. xxxi. 33. (n) Acts xxi. 14. (o) Psal. cxix. 113. (p) Collos. iii. 2. (q) Heb. ii. 1. 1 Cor. xv. 2. (r) Psal. ciii. 18. Col. iii. 16. (s) 1 Thes. v. 23. (t) Mic. vi. 8. (u) 1 Pet. i. 15. (w) Jam. i. 27.

O that we may be brought by that gospel which discovers to us *the grace of God, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.*(x)

O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness. (into the paths of holiness).(y)

Put thy Spirit within us, and cause us to walk in thy statutes, and to keep thy judgments and do them.(z)

May we be led by the Spirit, that so we might not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. O that the fruit of the Spirit, the fruits of holiness may adorn our lives.(a)

4. We may be more particular here, and mention the several duties we owe to God, to man, and ourselves; and pray for grace to perform them.

OUR DUTY TO GOD.

To begin with REPENTANCE.—Grant unto us that repentance which is unto life. (b)

Vouchsafe us that godly sorrow (grief for having dishonoured a gracious God) that worketh repentance to salvation. (c)

Enable us to confess our sins—with broken and contrite hearts,—to forsake our evil ways, and unrighteous thoughts, and to return unto thee the Lord.—Help us daily to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. (d)

FAITH. May we have faith in God. O may we unfeignedly believe that thou art, and that thou art a rewarder of them who diligently seek thee.(e)

Unto us let it be given also to believe on Christ. With our hearts may we believe, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and that he was sent into the world, that the world thro' him might be saved.(f)

Bestow

(x) Tit. ii. 11, 12. (y) Psal. cxix. 5. Psal. cxliii. 10.
 (z) Ezek. xxxvi. 27. (a) Gal. v. 18, 16, 22. (b) Acts xi.
 18. (c) 2 Cor. vii. 10. (d) Prov. xxviii. 13. Psal. li. 17.
 Isai. lv. 7. Mat. iii. 8. (e) Mar. xi. 22. Heb. xi. 6.
 (f) Phil. i. 29. Rom. x. 9. Acts viii. 37. Joh. iii. 17.

Bestow upon us that faith which shall render the Redeemer *precious to our souls, purify our hearts, and work by love.*(g)

The life which we live in the flesh, may we live by faith in the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us.(h)

We pray moreover for faith as it respects an eternal state. Grant us that *faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.*(i)

By faith may we overcome the world.(k)

Lord, increase our faith. Make us strong in faith, giving glory to God.(l)

TRUST and HOPE. May we *trust in the Lord with all our hearts; and in all our ways acknowledge thee, and do thou direct our paths.*(m)

May we *trust in thee, O Lord, and do good; trust in thee at all times; for thou art God Almighty. Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.*(n)

Help us to *trust in Christ Jesus, as one who delivers from the wrath to come.*(o)

Give us the *hope of eternal life. O that we may rejoice in hope of the glory of God; be partakers of that hope which maketh not ashamed; and abound in hope thro' the power of the Holy Ghost.*(p)

FEAR, as it consists in a desire to please, and a care not to offend God.—Work in us that *fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom. May we be in the fear of the Lord all the day long.*(q)

LOVE and OBEDIENCE. *The Lord direct our hearts into the love of God. O that we may love thee with*
all

(g) 1 Pet. ii. 7. Acts xv. 9. Gal. v. 6. (h) Chap. ii. 20. (i) Heb. xi. 1. (k) 1 Joh. v. 4. (l) Luk. xvii. 5. Rom. iv. 20. (m) Prov. iii. 5, 6. (n) Psal. xxxvii. 3. lxii. 8. Rev. xvi. 7. Psal. lxxxiv. 12. (o) Eph. i. 12. 1 Thess. i. 10. (p) Tit. i. 2. Rom. v. 2, 5. Chap. xv. 3. (q) Prov. ix. 10. Chap. xxiii. 17.

all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, (r) sincerely, wholly, constantly, and with the warmest affection.*

May we keep ourselves in the love of God. (s)

That Jesus whom we have not seen, yet may we love; —believing in him may we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. (t)

Let nothing separate us from the love of Christ. (u)

Help us diligently to hearken to thy voice; and do that which is right in thy sight, and keep all thy statutes. (x)

Cause the love of Christ to constrain us, to live to the glory of him who died for us, and rose again. (y)

PATIENCE and resignation under afflictions. Let the Lord do what seemeth him good. (z)

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. (a)

In us may patience have its perfect work. (b)

IMITATION OF GOD AND CHRIST. Enable us to be followers of thee as dear children; may we grow like to our God in knowledge, (of our duty and true interest), righteousness, holiness, and all goodness. (c)

May we daily behold that example which Christ hath left us, and walk even as he walked. (d)

WORSHIP sincere, reverent, &c. O God the infinite Spirit help us to worship thee in spirit and in truth. ---May we serve God with reverence and godly fear.--- May we attend upon thee without distraction: lift up holy hands without wrath; and pour out our hearts before thee. (e)

Jus-

(r) 2 Thess. iii. 5. Mar: 12, 30. (s) Jud. ver. 21. (t) 1 Pet. i. 7, 8. (u) Rom. viii. 35. (x) Exod. xv. 26. (y) 2 Cor. v 14, 15. (z) 1 Sam. iii. 18. (a) Job i. 21. (b) Jam. i. 4. (c) Ephes. v. 1. Col. iii. 10. Ephes. iv. 24. Psalm xxxiii. 5. (d) 1 Pet. ii. 21. 1 Joh. ii. 6. (e) Joh. iv. 24. iv. 24. Heb. xii. 28. 1 Cor. vii. 35. 1 Tim. ii. 8. Psal. lxii. 8.

* "These expressions, *heart, soul, mind, and strength*, may signify all the faculties of our nature, viz. the understanding, will, affections, and executive powers."

THE DUTIES WE OWE OUR NEIGHBOUR.

JUSTICE. *That which is altogether just may we follow.* (f)

Help us to render to all their due. Whatsoever we would (or may reasonably expect) that men should do to us, may we do even so to them. (g)

BROTHERLY LOVE. Enable us to love our neighbour as ourselves. (h)

May we love one another with a pure heart fervently. (i)

CHARITY in doing good; in forgiving injuries; and in judging and speaking of what relates to others. As we have opportunity, may we do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith. (k)

O that like our divine master we may love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, &c. (l)

Help us to overcome evil with good. (m)

May we judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment. (n)

Let the law of kindness be in our tongues; that we may not backbite, nor take up a reproach against our neighbour. (o)

HONOR and ESTEEM. In honor may we be preferring one another. Honor (pay a proper respect to) all men. (p)

PEACEABLENESS. As much as lieth in us may we live peaceably with all men. (q)

Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. (r)

TRUTH. May we put away lying, and speak every man truth with his neighbour. (s)

Lord, keep the door of our lips. Remove from us the way of lying. (t)

EDI-

(f) Deut. xvi. 20. (g) Rom. xiii. 7. Mat. vii. 12. (h) Luk. x. 27. (i) 1 Pet. i. 22. (k) Gal. vi. 10 (l) Mat. v. 44. (m) Rom. xii. 21. (n) Joh. vii. 24. (o) Prov xxxi. 26. Psal. xv. 3. (p) Rom. xii. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 17. (q) Rom. xii. 18. (r) Chap. xiv. 19. (s) Eph. iv. 25. (t) Ps. cxli. 3. Ps. cxix. 29.

EDIFICATION. Cause us to edify one another by the words of wisdom, and good example. (u)

Let our speech be always with grace (mild) seasoned with salt, wholesome and improving. (x)

May we be blameless and harmless as the Sons of God, and shine as lights in the world. (y)

THE DUTY OF MAN TO HIMSELF.

SELF-EDIFICATION. Enable us to get wisdom; and with all our getting, to get understanding. (z)

Assist us in striving to enter in at the strait gate; and in labouring for that meat which endureth to everlasting life. (a)

HUMILITY and MEEKNESS. May we learn of Christ to be meek and lowly in heart; that so we may find rest to our souls. (b)

Put upon us the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in thy sight is of great price. (c)

Let us be clothed (as becomes the elect of God holy and beloved) with bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness and long-suffering. (d)

CONTENTMENT, moderate desires towards earthly objects.

Teach us in whatsoever state we are therewith to be content. (e)

May we use this world as not abusing it; and continually bear in mind that the time is short, and that the fashion of this world passeth away. (f)

TEMPERANCE and CHASTITY. Make us temperate in all things. (g)

May we abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul; put filthy communication out of our mouths; and keep ourselves pure. (h)

DILI-

(u) 1 Theff. v. 11. (x) Col. iv. 6. 1 Tim. vi. 3. (y) Philip ii. 15, 16. (z) Prov. iv. 7. (a) Luk. xiii. 24. Joh. vi. 27. (b) Mat. xi. 29. (c) 1 Pet. iii. 4. (d) Col. iii. 12. (e) Phil. iv. 11. (f) 1 Cor. vii. 29, 31. (g) Chap. ix. 25. (h) 1 Pet. ii. 11. Col. iii. 8. 1 Tim. v. 12. (i) Eccles. ix. 10.

DILIGENCE and SELF-DENIAL. *Whatsoever our hands find to do, may we do it with our might.*(i)

Enable us to do the work of the day *as the duty of every day requires.*(k)

May we *deny ourselves, take up our cross, daily follow Christ, keep under the body and bring it into subjection.*(l)

O that we may keep in view the self-denial of *Christ*; like him may we *not please ourselves*, [study our own ease, &c.] but be disposed to *please our neighbours, for their good, and to their edification.*(m)

WE ARE TO PRAY, THAT OUR OBEDIENCE MAY BE SINCERE, UNIVERSAL AND CHEARFUL. *In our spirits may there be no guile. Whatsoever we do, may we do it heartily, as to the Lord:* and always have a good conscience.(n)

O that we may have our conversation in the world, *in simplicity and godly sincerity.*(o)

Help us to *lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.* May we abstain from all appearance of evil.(p)

Teach us to *walk in all thy commandments and ordinances blameless.* (q)

May we *serve thee the Lord our God with joyfulness and gladness of heart.* (r)

WE ARE TO PRAY FOR TENDERNESS OF SPIRIT. May our hearts be tender.—O that we may *tremble at thy word; stand in awe, and sin not; and be grieved, when we behold transgressors.* (s)

FOR ZEAL, or an earnest concern about a thing joined with diligent endeavours. Give us to be *zealously affected always in a good thing.* (t)

Make us *zealous for good works;* and may our zeal be according to knowledge. (u)

G

For

(k) Ezra iii. 4. (l) Luke ix. 23. 1 Cor. ix. 27. (m) Rom. xv. 2, 3. (n) Psal. xxxii. 2. Col. iii. 23. Heb. xiii. 18. (o) 2 Cor. i. 12. (p) Heb. xii. 1. 1 Thes. v. 22. (q) Luke i. 6. (r) Deut. xxviii. 47. (s) 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27. Isaiah lxvi. 2. Psalm iv. 4. cxix. 158. (t) Gal. iv. 18. (u) Tit. ii. 14. Rom. x. ii.

FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH.* May we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (x)

Let our path be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. (y)

May we add to faith, virtue (holy courage) and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; O that these things may abound in us. (a)

Lord grant that forgetting those things which are behind, we may reach forth unto those things which are before, and press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (b)

FOR PERSEVERANCE. Help us to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. (c)

May we continue in the Grace of God, and not be moved away from the hope of the gospel. (d)

Blessed God grant us according to the riches of thy glory, to be strengthened with might by thy Spirit in the inner man; and establish our hearts unblameable in holiness before thee, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (e)

CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGES.

RECONCILIATION, or Peace with God. Being justified by faith, may we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. (f)

Now the Lord of peace himself give us peace always, by all means. (g)

ADOPTION into the Family of God. O that we may become Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God. (h)

Make

* Growth in wisdom and prudence, heavenly-mindedness, &c: See Mr. Orton's Catechism.

(x) 2 Pet. iii. 18. (y) Prov. iv. 18. (a) 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 8. (b) Phil. iii. 13, 14. (c) Heb. x. 23. (d) Acts xiii. 43. Gal. i. 23. (e) Eph. iii. 16. 1 Thes. iii. 13. (f) Rom. v. 1. (g) 2 Thes. iii. 16. (h) Ephes. ii. 19.

Make us *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.* (i)

A SENSE OF OUR INTEREST IN THE DIVINE FAVOR AND COMMUNION WITH GOD IN RELIGIOUS DUTIES. Let thy Spirit witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God; say unto our souls that Thou art our salvation; and thus make us to hear joy and gladness. (k)

May we have fellowship with thee, O Father, and with thy Son Jesus Christ. (l)

Grant us the blessedness of the man whom thou chusest and causest to approach unto thee. (m)

COMFORT under Afflictions. Let the eternal God be our refuge, and underneath be the everlasting arms. (n)

The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; be thou our strength, and a very present help in trouble. (o)

Enable us to glory in tribulation. (p)

DIVINE SUPPORTS in death, and happiness in another world.

When we walk thro' the valley of the shadow of death, may we fear no evil: be thou with us, may thy rod and staff comfort us. (q)

In our last moments help us to use that language of triumph. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. (r)

When absent from the body, may we be present with the Lord. (s)

Guide us with thy counsel, and afterwards receive us to glory. (t)

Grant that an entrance may be ministered unto us abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (u)

T E M.

G 2

(i) Rom. viii. 17. (k) Ver. 16. Psalm xxxv. 3. Pf. li. 8.
(l) 1 John i. 3. (m) Psalm lxxv. 4. (n) Deut. xxxiii. 27.
(o) Psalm xxxvii. 39 Pf. xlv. 1. (p) Rom. v. 3. (q) Psal.
xxiii. 4. (r) 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57. (s) 2 Cor. v. 8. (t) Psalm
lxxiii. 24. (u) 2 Pet. i. 11.

TEMPORAL MERCIES.

WE ARE TO PRAY FOR THE NECESSARY SUPPORTS OF LIFE. *Give us bread to eat, and raiment to put on.*

(v)

Feed us with food convenient for us.(w)

May we prosper and be in health, but above all may our souls prosper. (x)

PRESERVATION FROM EVIL. *Let no evil befall us, nor any plague come nigh our dwelling.* (y)

O Lord be thou our shade on our right hand, that the sun may not smite us by day; nor the moon by night. (z)

Make an hedge about us, and about our houses, and about all that we have on every side. (a).

The Lord preserve our going out, and coming in, from this time forth and even forevermore. (b)

Tho' it becomes us to be importunate with God, when we pray for spiritual favors; yet when we address him for temporal good things, we should limit our petitions in such language as this,---“ If it
“ may be for the true interest of our souls and thy
“ glory, let this favor be granted us; otherwise we
“ we would humbly submit and say, Father, not
“ our wills, but thine be done.”

PETITIONS OR INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS.

FOR THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL AMONG THE HEATHEN, THE CONVERSION OF JEWS AND MAHOMETANS.

Let thy salvation and thy righteousness be openly shewed in the sight of the Heathen.(c)

Cause the people who sit in darkness to see a great light; and to them who sit in the region and shadow of death, let light spring up.(d)

Give thy son the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.(e)

Let

(v) Gen. xxviii. 20. (w) Prov. xxx. 8. (x) 3 Epist. of John, ver. 2. (y) Psal. xci. 10. (z) Ps. cxxi. 5, 6. (a) Job i. 10. (b) Ps. cxxi. 8. (c) Psal. xlviii. 2. (d) Mat. iv. 16. (e) Psal. ii. 7, 8.

* See Watts's Works, vol. iii. p. 115.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.(f)

O that the Jews may turn to the Lord, and the veil be taken away, which is upon their heart, when reading the Old Testament.(g)

Cause the fullness of the Gentiles to come in, and all Israel to be saved.(h)

FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH OF GOD. Grace be with all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.(i)

Let the word of the Lord, wherever it is preached, have a free course, and be glorified.(k)

May righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost abound amongst professors.(l)

FOR SUCH AS ARE SUFFERING PERSECUTION FOR THE SAKE OF RELIGION; AND FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF ANTI-CHRIST.

We would remember them who are in bonds for the testimony of Jesus. O send from above, and deliver them from those who hate them.(m)

Let not the rod of the wicked rest upon the lot of the righteous.(n)

Strengthen the patience and faith of the suffering saints, that they may hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.(o)

Let no weapon formed against thy church prosper.(p)

Let the man of sin be consumed with the spirit of thy mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of thy coming.(q)

The Lord grant that those unhappy souls who are under the power of a strong delusion may be undeceived, and brought to receive the truth in the love of it, that they might be saved.(r)

WE ARE IN A PARTICULAR MANNER TO REMEMBER IN PRAYER OUR NATIVE COUNTRY.—Here it will be

(f) Psal. lxxvii. 3. (g) 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15, 16. (h) Rom. xi. 25, 26. (i) Eph. vi. 24. (k) 2 Theff. iii. 1. (l) Rom. xiv. 17. (m) Heb. xiii. 3. Rev. i. 9. Psal. xviii. 16, 17. (n) Psal. cxxv. 3. (o) Rev. xiii. 10. Lament. iii. 26. (p) Isai. liv. 17. (q) 2 Theff. ii. 3, 8. (r) Ver. 11, 10.

be proper to join thanksgiving, confession and petition together.

The lines are fallen to us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage (f)

Thou hast *shewed thy word unto us*, favoured us with a divine revelation; thou *hast not dealt so with every nation*: we would *praise the Lord* for so great a privilege.(t)

Lord, thou hast been favourable unto our land, wrought out for it wonderful deliverances. We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us what work thou didst in their days, and in times of old. And as we have heard, so have we seen.(u)

We must confess that we are *a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers.(v)*

Iniquity abounds amongst us, and the love of many is waxen cold.(w)

Though our sins have deserved it, we earnestly pray that thou *wouldest not remove our candlestick (the gospel, &c.) out of its place.(x)*

Give us *not a famine of the word of the Lord*; but continue unto us the means of salvation, and may this *glory always dwell in our land.(y)*

With respect to outward enjoyments, we entreat that thou *wouldest not make our heavens as brass, and our earth as iron*; but still cause our land to *yield her increase.(z)*

Abundantly bless our provisions, and satisfy our poor with bread.(a)

Peace be within our walls, and prosperity within our palaces.(b)

Though our backslidings are many, and we have sinned exceedingly against thee, yet do thou these things for thy name's sake, for thy mercy's sake in Jesus Christ.(c)

We

(f) Psal. xvi. 6. (t) Psal. cxlviii. 19, 20. (u) Psal. lxxxv. 1. Psal. xlv. 1. xlviii. 8. (v) Isai. i. 4. (w) Mat. xxiv. 12. (x) Rev. ii. 5. (y) Amos viii. 11. Psal. lxxxv. 9. (z) Deut. xxviii. 23. Levit. xxvi. 4. (a) Psal. cxxxii. 15. (b) Psal. cxxii. 7. (c) Jer. xiv. 7.

WE ARE TO PRAY SUCCESS TO ATTEND ALL ENDEAVORS TOWARDS REFORMATION OF MANNERS.

O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end.(d)

Cause the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.(e)

Let that *righteousness* abound amongst us, which *exalteth a nation*, and deliver us from *sin*, which is *a reproach to any people.(f)*

HEAL THE UNHAPPY DIVISIONS OF PROFESSORS.

The God of patience and consolation, grant us to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus: that we may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.(g)

WE ARE TO PRAY FOR THE KING, QUEEN AND ROYAL FAMILY.

Make our king *a nursing father*, and our queen *a nursing mother* to thy British Israel.(h)

Let *mercy and truth* preserve the king, and his throne be upholden by *mercy.(i)*

Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness to the king's son.(k)

May the royal offspring be *branches of righteousness*; O that thy *testimonies* may be their *delight*, and their *counsellors.(l)*

FOR ALL CONCERNED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, AND FOR MAGISTRATES OF EVERY ORDER.

Counsel our counsellors, and *teach our senators wisdom.(m)*

Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord. n)

Make those who rule over us *able men*, such as *fear God*, men of *truth*, and *hating covetousness.(o)*

Let rulers be not *a terror to good works*, but to *evil.(p)*

May those who judge remember that they judge *not for man*, but for the *Lord*, who is with them in the *judgment.(q)* For

Pfal. vi. 4. (d) Psal. vii. 9. (e) Zech. xiii. 2. (f) Prov. xiv. 34. (g) Rom. xv. 5, 6. (h) Isai. xlix. 23. (i) Prov. xx. 28. (k) Psal. lxxii. 1. (l) Jer. xxxiii. 15. Psal. cxix. 24. (m) cv. 22. (n) Isai. xi. 2. (o) Exod. xviii. 21. (p) Rom. xiii. 3. (q) 2 Chron. xix. 6.

FOR SUBJECTS IN GENERAL. Give grace unto the subjects of this land, *to submit themselves to every lawful ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors.*(r)

May we lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, under those who are sent by thee, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them who do well.(s)

FOR MINISTERS AND HEARERS, UNIVERSITIES AND ACADEMIES.

Incline them to give attendance to reading, to meditate on divine things, to give themselves unto prayer, and to the ministry of the word, and to give themselves wholly to them, and to continue in them.(t).

O that ministers may save themselves, and those who hear them.(u)

May they serve the Lord with all humility of mind, keep back from their people nothing that is profitable for them, teach from house to house as well as in public, testifying repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.(v)

Make ministers examples to the flock in word, conversation, charity, spirit, faith and purity.(w)

May they watch for souls, as they that must give account.(x)

O that hearers may receive the word with all readiness of mind, and search the scriptures daily.(y)

Quicken those who are dead in trespasses and sins; and where thou hast begun a good work, perform (finish) it until the day of Jesus Christ.(z)

Cause hearers to strive together in their prayers to God for their ministers.(a)

May ministers and people grow in knowledge and holiness, under the care of the great shepherd and bishop of souls.(b)

Bestow

(r) 1 Pet. ii. 13. (s) 1 Tim. ii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 14. (t) 1 Tim. iv. 13, 15, 16. Acts vi. 4. (u) 1 Tim. iv. 16 (v) Acts xx. 19, 20, 21. (w) 1 Tim. iv. 12. (x) Heb. xiii. 17. (y) Acts xvii. 11. (z) Ephes. ii. 1. Phil. i. 6. (a) Rom. xv. 30. (b) 2 Pet. iii. 18. 1 Ep. ii. 25.

Bestow upon the *schools of the prophets* every good gift, and every perfect gift.(c)

Cast the salt of divine grace abundantly into every fountain of sacred learning, that from thence may issue streams which shall make glad the churches of God.(d)

FOR HUSBANDS AND WIVES. Make them *helps* meet for each other: may the husband love his wife even as himself; and the wife reverence her husband.(e)

Enable them to live as *heirs together* of the grace of life; that their prayers be not hindered.(f)

PARENTS AND CHILDREN. O that parents may bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;—train them up in the way they should go;—nourish them up in the words of faith, and good doctrine; and not provoke them to wrath.(g)

Let parents behave themselves wisely, and walk with- in their houses with perfect [sincere] hearts.(h)

May children hear the instruction of their fathers, and forsake not the law of their mothers.(i)

Incline the hearts of children to honor and obey their parents in all [lawful] things, that it may be well with them.(k)

MASTERS AND SERVANTS. Cause masters to give unto their servants what is just and equal; and may they not rule over them with rigour.(l)

Assist heads of families in teaching their households to keep the way of the Lord.(m)

May servants be faithful to their masters.—Shew all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.(n)

Help them to obey in all lawful things their masters, according to the flesh; acting not with eye service, as

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men-

(c) 2 Chron xxxiv. 22. 2 Kings, ii. 5. Jam. i. 17. (d) 2 Kings ii. 21. comp. Mark ix. 49, 50. Psal. xlvi. 4. (e) Gen. ii. 18. Ephes. v. 33. (f) 1 Pet. iii. 7. (g) Ephes. vi. 4. Prov. xxii. 6. 1 Tim. iv. 6. (h) Psal. ci. 2. (i) Prov. i. 8. (k) Exod. xx. 12. Col. iii. 20. Ephes. vi. 2. (l) Col. iv. 1. Levit. xxv. 46. (m) Gen. xviii. 19. (n) Tit. ii. 10.

men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.(o)

FOR THE YOUNG, THE MIDDLE-AGED, AND THE OLD.

Give to the young to remember thee their Creator in the days of their youth.(p)

O that they may flee youthful lusts; and be sober minded.(q)

Let the word of God abide in them, that they may be strong, and overcome the wicked one.(r)

Preserve the middle-aged amidst the cares of this world from neglecting that one thing needful, the care of their souls.(s)

Make them diligent in business; and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.(t)

Forsake not the old and greyheaded; cast them not off in the time of old age; fail them not when their strength faileth.(u)

May the antient be found in the way of righteousness, that the hoary head may be a crown of glory.(v)

Enable old disciples of Christ to bring forth fruit in old age; and may thy comforts delight their souls.(w)

FOR THE RICH AND THE POOR. *May those that are rich in this world not be high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God.*

May they do good, be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.(x)

Make the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which thou hast promised to them that love thee.(y)

May the poor commit themselves unto thee.(z)

Do thou defend the poor, and satisfy them with bread, that they might praise thy name.(a)

FOR FRIENDS AND ENEMIES. *Our hearts desire and prayer*

(o) Col. iii. 22. Eph. vi. 6. (p) Eccles. xii. 1. (q) 2 Tim. ii. 22. Tit. ii. 6. (r) 1 Joh. ii. 14. (s) Mar. iv. 19. Luk. x. 42. (t) Rom. xii. 11. (u) Psal. lxxi. 18, 9. (v) Prov. xvi. 31. (w) Acts xxi. 16. Psal. xcii. 14. Psal. xciv. 19. (x) 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. (y) Jam. ii. 5. (z) Psal. x. 14. (a) Psal. lxxxii. 3. Psal. cxxxii. 15. Psal. lxxiv. 21.

prayer to God for our friends is, that they might be saved.(b)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with their spirits.(c)

Father forgive our enemies: lay not any of their sins to their charge.(d)

S E C T I O N V.

P L E A D I N G.

“**P**LEADING, or using arguments with God in an earnest, yet humble manner, to grant our several requests, has been considered by some as the fifth part of prayer.”—— Job xxiii. 4. Jer. xii. 1. These arguments are very numerous, but I shall confine myself to the principal.

I. We may plead with God, from the perfections of his nature, particularly his goodness and mercy; and from those promises of pardon, &c. he has been pleased to make to true penitents.

Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies, and thy loving kindnesses; for they have been ever of old.—O save us for thy mercies sake.(e)

Thou art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon thee.(f)

Thou art, O God, full of compassion, and gracious; long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.(g)

Pardon, we beseech thee, the iniquity of thy people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven, even until now.(h)

Remember not against us the sins of our youth, nor our transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou us, for thy goodness sake, O Lord.(i)

Hast thou not said that if the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return unto

H 2

thee

(b) Rom. x. 1. (c) Philem. ver. 25. (d) Luk. xxiii. 34. Act. vii. 60. (e) Psal. xxv. 6. Psal. vi. 4. (f) Psal. lxxxvi. 5. (g) Ver. 15. (h) Num. xiv. 19. (i) Psal. xxv. 7.

thee *the Lord*, thou wilt have mercy upon him, thou wilt abundantly pardon.(k)

Hast thou not declared that if the wicked will turn from all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all thy statutes, he shall surely live, he shall not die.(l)

II. From the several relations in which God stands unto men, especially to good men, and from the greatness of our wants and sorrows.

Thou art our Creator, wilt thou not have a desire to the work of thine hands.(m)

O Lord, I am thine, save me.(n)

O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant; and the son of thy hand-maid: accept and bless me.(o)

Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer, thy name is from everlasting.(p)

But now, O Lord, thou art our father: we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity forever.(q)

Innumerable suits have compassed us about, our iniquities have taken hold upon us, so that we are not able to look up.—Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver us; O Lord, make haste to help us.(r)

For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon our iniquity; for it is great.(s)

Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; deliver us, and purge away our sins for thy name's sake.(t)

The name and honor of God in the world was an argument often used in prayer by good men in ancient times. Joshua vii. 9. Isai. xxxviii. 18.

III. Christ.

(k) Isai. lv. 7. (l) Ezek. xviii. 21. (m) Job xiv. 15. (n) Psal. cxix. 94. (o) Psal. cxvi. 16. (p) Isai. lxiii. 16. (q) Chap. lxiv. 8, 9. (r) Psal. xl. 12, 13. (s) Psal. xxv. 11. (t) Psal. lxxix. 9.

III. Christians may plead with God from their own experiences, and likewise the experiences of others.

Thou hast been our help, leave us not, neither forsake us, O God of our salvation.(u)

Our fathers cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.(v)

IV. The grand argument is the name and mediation of Christ. John xvi. 23. Collos. iii. 17.*

We have sinned, but we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous; who is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.(w)

Hast thou not declared thyself the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.—Lord, we believe; help us against our unbelief.(x)

Thy son hath given his life a ransom for many: in him may we have life, may we have it more abundantly.(y)

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us:—therefore let the blessing of Abraham come upon us Gentiles: O may we receive through faith the promise of the spirit.(z)

Seeing that we have a great high priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.(a)

We plead the merits of that blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin.(b)

We beseech thee, O Lord, to grant us redemption through the blood of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of thy grace.(c)

Harken to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, and bestow upon us that pardon, peace, and assistance we want.(d)

Since thou hast not spared thine own son, but delivered

(u) Psal. xxvii. 9. (v) Psal. xxii. 4, 5. (w) Luk. xv. 21.
 1 Joh. ii. 1, 2 (x) Rom. iii. 26. Mar. ix. 24. (y) Mat.
 xx. 28. Joh x. 10. (z) Gal iii. 13, 14. (a) Heb. iv. 14,
 16. (b) 1 Joh. i. 7. (c) Eph. i. 7. (d) Heb. xii. 24.

* See p. 9, 32.

erred him up for us all, surely with him thou wilt freely give us all things truly good.(e)

May that Jesus, the merits of whose death and intercession we have been pleading, be made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.(f)

SECTION VI.

SELF-DEDICATION, or PROFESSION.

THIS part of prayer contains the following things.

I. A declaration of our former transactions with God. We have not only been *baptized in thy name*, devoted to thee by this sacred ordinance, but have often *said unto the Lord, thou art our Lord.*(g)

Yea, we have *subscribed with our hands * unto the Lord of hosts.*(h)

We have approached thy holy table, and have *vowed unto thee, the mighty God of Jacob*, that we would take thee *for our God*.

We have *sworn†*, that we will keep thy righteous judgments.

We have made a covenant with thee by commemorating the *sacrifice of thy Son.*(i) ||

II. A present surrender of ourselves to God, agreeable

(e) Rom. viii. 32. (f) 1 Cor. i. 30. (g) Ver. 15. Psal. xvi. 2. (h) Isai. xlv. 5. (i) Psal. cxxxii. 2. cxix. 1c6. l. 5.

* This language indeed can with propriety only be used by the person who has drawn up for himself a solemn form of self-dedication (or else has seriously considered some instrument made by another) and set his hand to it.

† The term *sacrament*, which we apply to the Lord's supper, signifies an *oath*.

|| The reader will perceive that the above expressions are designed for the devout communicant.

greeable to the relations he bears to us, and in such ways as his word directs.

(1.) We devote ourselves unto God, as our Owner.

All things come of thee, and of thine own do we now give thee.(k)

The God whose we are we will serve.(l)

We are thine, O Lord, not only by creation, but likewise by redemption. Thou hast *redeemed us with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*(m)

We are *bought with a price*; we would, therefore, *glorify God in our bodies, and in our spirits, which are thine.*(n)

(2.) We dedicate ourselves unto God, as our Instructor. Thou art *the Lord our God, who teacheth us to profit*(o), [or gives us the knowledge of good things.]

Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach us in the way, and guide us with judgment.(p)

(3.) We devote ourselves unto God, as our chief Good. Thou art our *portion, O Lord, we intreat thy favor with our whole hearts.*(q)

The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him.(r)

Whom have I in Heaven but thee? there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.(s)

(4.) We are to profess our resolutions of cleaving to the service of God, and aiming at the divine honor, living and dying; and consequently of renouncing every thing that is inconsistent herewith.

O Lord, our God, lords besides thee have had dominion over us: but by thee we have been delivered, therefore we will make mention of thy name only, serve none but thee.(t)

We would no more *yield our members servants to uncleanness, or to any other iniquity*; but we desire to
yield

(k) 1 Chron. xxix. 14. (l) Aët. xxvii. 23. (m) 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. (n) 1 Cor. vi. 20. (o) Isai. xlviii. 17. (p) Psa xxv. 8. (q) Psa cxix. 57, 58. (r) Lam. iii. 24. (s) Psa lxxiii. 25; (t) Isai. xxvi. 13.

yield our members servants to righteousness, to universal holiness.(u)

Whatsoever others do we will serve the Lord.(v)

Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we desire to do all to the glory of God.(w)

Whilst we live, we would live unto the Lord; when we die, we would die unto the Lord: whether we live or die, we would be the Lord's.(x)

(5.) This dedication of ourselves to God must be made through that great Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, and with a dependance on the Holy Spirit.

Engaged by the mercies of God, we present our bodies and souls a living sacrifice, acceptable unto thee by Jesus Christ.(y)*

Relying upon the Spirit to help our infirmities, we would humbly, heartily, seriously, and joyfully yield ourselves to God, honor thee with our substance, and with all our talents.(z)

III. When we have thus dedicated our persons, and every thing we possess to the most high God; we are earnestly to intreat, that he would be pleased to receive us into his everlasting favor and friendship.

O Lord, receive us, and make an everlasting covenant with us, that thou wilt not turn away from us, to do us good.(a)

Be thou our God, and our portion forever.(b)

Be a father unto us, and never leave us, nor forsake us.(c)

SECTION

(u) Rom. vi. 19: (v) Josh. xxiv. 15. (w) 1 Cor. x. 31.
(x) Rom. xiv. 8. (y) Rom. xii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 5: (z) Rom. viii. 26. chap. vi. 13: Prov. iii. 9. (a) 2 Cor. vi. 17. Jer. xxxii. 40. (b) Psal. xcv. 7. Psal. lxxiii. 26, (c) 2 Cor. vi. 18. Heb. xiii. 5.

* By *bodies* in this text we are to understand our whole persons: seeing the body cannot be presented to God, as a living sacrifice, without the soul.

SECTION VII.

THANKSGIVING.

MANY and great are the benefits God has conferred upon us; for which we are bound frequently to pay him our grateful acknowledgments. He gave us our existence, made us reasonable immortal beings, next the angels; for these blessings let our hearts and tongues join in thanksgiving, which is the most delightful part of our devotions, Psal. cxlvii. 1. and peculiarly acceptable to God.

1. Thou art *the Lord that created us, and he that formed us*, therefore unto thee we would offer thanksgiving, and shew forth thy praise.(d)

We will praise thee, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made, and curiously wrought.(e)

Thou art *the Father of our spirits*, as well as the former of our bodies: we thank thee that thou hast taught us more than the beasts of the earth, and made us wiser than the fowls of heaven.(f)

We thank thee that *thou hast made man but a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.*(g)

2. We are to render thanksgiving to God, for preserving care. Thou, O Lord, art our life, and the length of our days; (the giver and preserver of life and health) *let our mouths be filled with thy praise.*(h)

O Lord God, *by thee have I been holden up from the womb: my praise shall be continually of thee.*(i)

Having obtained help from thee, O God, I continue unto this day.(k)

3. For daily bread, the bounties of Providence. We give thanks unto the God of Heaven, who giveth food to us, and to all flesh: for his mercy endureth forever.(l)

I

4. We

(d) Isai. xliii. 1. Psal. l. 14. li. 15. (e) Psal. cxxxix. 14, 15. (f) Heb. xii. 9. Job xxxv. 11. (g) Psal. viii. 5. (h) Deut. xxx. 20. Psal. lxxi. 8. (i) ver. 6. (k) Acts xxvi. 22. (l) Psal. cxxxvi. 25, 26.

Praised be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits, even the God of our salvation.(m)

4. We are likewise to thank God for success in lawful business; that he hath *blessed the work of our hands*—for the peaceable enjoyment of what we possess; that we *sit under our vines, and under our fig-trees, and none make us afraid*:—for agreeable friends and relatives, &c. &c.(n)

II. Our high praises are due to the God of Heaven, for spiritual blessings.

1. We thank thee for publishing to mankind the Holy Scriptures, which contain such treasures of grace.

For that *word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.(o)*

For that *divine light which shineth in a dark place.(p)*

2. We would *praise thee with our whole hearts*, for thy love and mercy to our fallen world in Christ Jesus the Lord: for those glorious *things which angels desire to look into.(q)*

We thank thee, that *when the fullness of time was come*, thou didst send forth thy Son—made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.(r)

That he took hold of perishing mankind, and was in all things made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.(s)

O Lord, we receive it, as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; even the chief.(t)

We are to thank God for that holy example which Christ hath set before men—for his excellent doctrine.

(m) Psal. lxxviii. 19. (n) Job i. 10. Mic. iv. 4. (o) 1 Pet. i. 23. (p) 2 Epist. i. 19. (q) Psal. ix. 1. Pet. i. 12. (r) Gal. iv. 4, 5. (s) Heb. ii. 16, 17. (t) 1 Tim. i. 15.

trine, and the kind and wonderful miracles he wrought, to confirm his doctrine: that *the works which he did bore witness of him, that the Father had sent him.*(u)

We are to thank God, especially for his Son's meritorious death.

That Christ hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.(v)

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing; for he was slain, that he might redeem us to God by his blood.(w)

Thanks, eternal thanks unto God, for this unspeakable gift the Lord Jesus: for commending his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.(x)

For his resurrection from the dead. That as he *was delivered for our offences, so he rose again for our justification; and was declared to be the Son of God, by this glorious display of divine power.*(y)

For his ascension. That *when Christ ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, (triumphed over the evil spirits) and gave gifts unto men.*(z)

For his intercession. That *having born the sin of many, he makes intercession for transgressors.*(a)

For his exaltation, and being constituted the judge of the quick and the dead. That *because he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; thou hast given him a name above every name:—that thou hast appointed a day in which thou wilt judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom thou hast ordained; and that the Lord Jesus shall then come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.*(b)

3. We are to thank God for the Holy Spirit, in his miraculous, and common influences.

I 2

For

(u) Joh. v. 36. (v) Heb. ix. 24, 26. (w) Rev. v. 9, 12. (x) 2 Cor. ix. 15. Rom v. 8. (y) Rom. iv. 25. Chap. i. 4. (z) Eph. iv. 8. (a) Isai. liii. 12. (b) Phil. ii. 8, 9. Act xvi. 31. 2 Thes. i. 7, 10.

For *bearing witness* to the truth of the gospel, *both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.*(c)

For his readiness to *give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him*, in sincerity, to enlighten, sanctify, quicken, and comfort their hearts.(d)

4. We are to praise the name of the Most High, for that *eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, hath promised to his people.*(e)

That *crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*(f)

That *inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.*(g)

5. We are to thank God, for having guarded the sacred Scriptures from age to age, and supported the Christian cause, amidst the violent oppositions it has endured, from the enemies of truth and goodness;—for the holy lives and triumphant deaths of martyrs and others; whereby the divine origin of the Scriptures has been further confirmed;—for the appointment of Sabbaths, and ordinances, and providing places of worship for us.

6. *We are bound to give thanks unto God*, if we have enjoyed the advantages of a religious education.—We are to thank him for the admonitions of conscience—the secret and kind motions of his Spirit on our minds; and above all, if we have reason to hope, that *we are regenerated, or born from above; created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, brought to take pleasure in them:—in such a case, we shall be led to thank God for the deliverance we have already received from spiritual evil, and the prospect of being saved from everlasting condemnation;—for the spiritual good we enjoy, and our pleasing expectations as to the next world. The fourth part of prayer, or petition, will furnish us with abundant suitable matter here.—I add, gratitude should fill
our

(c) Heb. ii. 4. (d) Luk. xi. 13. (e) Tit. i. 2. (f) Jam. i. 12. (g) 1 Pet. i. 4.

our hearts, and praise employ our tongues, for any remarkable answer to prayer.

III. Our thanksgivings may be enlarged by the consideration of the multitude of our mercies. *Many, O Lord, our God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee.(h)*

How precious are thy thoughts of kindness and mercy unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.(i)

By the consideration of the self-sufficiency of God, the author of our blessings. He stands in no need of us. *Our goodness extendeth not unto thee.(k)*

By the consideration of our great unworthiness. Behold, we are *not worthy of the least of thy mercies.(l)*

S E C T I O N VIII.

DOXOLOGY, or BLESSING.

THIS principally consists in ascribing glory to God, as his eternal due, and wishing his honors may remain amongst his creatures for ever."

Now to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.(m)

To God be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.(n)

Or, having made mention of the name of Christ, towards the conclusion of prayer, we may add any of the following doxologies.

Now blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.(o)

Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel,—let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen.(p)

Now

(h) Psal. xl. 5. (i) Psal. cxxxix. 17, 18. (k) Psal. xvi. 2.
(l) Gen. xxxii. 10. (m) Rom. xvi. 27. (n) Eph. iii. 21.
(o) Psal. xli. 13. (p) Psal. lxxii. 18, 19.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.(r)

Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.(s)

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might be unto God, for ever and ever. Amen.(t)

Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.(u)

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.(v)—The Hebrew word *Amen*, signifies *truth*, or *surely*. By the use of this term at the end of our prayers, we declare, that we believe what we have said; that we heartily wish God may regard our requests, &c. hereby also we express our hope of acceptance with him.

THE FOLLOWING PSALMS MAY BE CONSIDERED AS A KIND OF SUPPLEMENT TO THE PRECEDING SECTIONS:—LET US GIVE THEM A FREQUENT AND ATTENTIVE PERUSAL, THAT SO OUR MINDS MAY BE FURTHER ENRICHED WITH SUITABLE MATTER FOR ADDRESSES TO GOD.

Psalms of prayer, thanksgiving and praise, XVI. XXXIII. XLVII. LVII. LXVI. LXVII. CIII. CIV. CVII. CXV. CXIX, Aleph, Daleth, He, Pe, Tau. Psalms CXXXVI. CXLV. CXLVI. CXLVII. CXLVIII.

Penitential Psalms, VI. XXXII. XXXVIII. LI. CXXX. CXLIII.

Morning

(r) 1 Tim. i. 17. (s) Jud. ver. 24, 25. (t) Rev. vii. 12.
(u) Ver. 10. (v) Rev. i. 5, 6.

Morning Psalms, III. V. XIX.

Evening Psalms, IV. VIII. CXXXIX.

Morning or Evening Psalms, XCI. CXXI.
CXLI.

Psalms for the Lord's day, XLV. XLVIII, LXIII. LXV. LXXXIV. XCII. XCV. XCVI. C. CXXII. CXXXII. for the devout Christian, who is detained from public worship by the hand of Providence, XLII. XLIII.

Psalms adapted to a season of outward affliction or inward distress, XXV. LXIX. LXXXVI. LXXXVIII. CXIX, Jod, Nun. CXLII. adapted to national troubles, LXXVII. LXXX. CXXIII.

Psalms on recovery from sickness, and deliverance from other calamities, XVIII. XXX. XXXIV. XL. CXVI. CXVIII. Public deliverance, LXXVI. CXXIV. CXXVI.

Funeral Psalms, XXIII. XXXIX. XC. CII.

In some of these psalms we meet with passages that are neither suitable to our circumstances or the aimable spirit of the Gospel; such exceptionable parts the reader will discern, and not use them in his acts of devotion.—Thus, for instance, as Dr. WATTS observes, while we are kindling into divine love by the meditations of the loving kindness of God, and the multitude of his tender mercies, within a few verses, some dreadful curses against men present themselves; that God would *pour out his indignation upon them, and let his wrathful anger take hold of them;—blot them out of the book of the living*, Psal. lxxix. 24—28. which is so contrary to the new commandment of loving our enemies, and even under
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the Old Testament is best accounted for, by considering these expressions as prophecies of the destruction of the persons to whom they refer, and not as David's prayers against his enemies.

DIRECTIONS

DIRECTIONS RELATING TO MATTER, METHOD, EXPRESSION, VOICE, AND GESTURE.*

THE MATTER OF PRAYER.

WE should endeavour to furnish our minds with a variety of matter, that we may not be forced to make too long pauses, and to prevent vain repetitions in prayer.——A rich supply of divine thoughts will assist the exercise of our own, and the graces of our fellow worshippers.

In order to furnish ourselves with proper matter,

I. Let us labour after an extensive knowledge of God in his nature and perfections, and the various glorious and gracious manifestations of them in his works and word. We ought likewise to take frequent views of our sins, sorrows, wants, mercies, and hopes: *the former* will supply us with suitable thoughts for invocation, adoration and praise; and will suggest to us many arguments in pleading with God for his favourable regards: *the latter* will help us in confession, petition and thanksgiving.

II. I would humbly and earnestly request you, to get a good acquaintance with the collections of scripture given in this book.—If you have time and ability, set down all the parts of prayer, viz. Invocation, Adoration, &c. as common-places, and under these heads you may write the most suitable and affecting passages you meet with in reading the Bible*, or other authors, or such as you hear delivered in prayer or in sermons.——It is very improving, when you return from a place of worship,

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to

* The author here presents the reader with what appears to be most material in Dr. Watts's tract on the Gift of Prayer.

to join with some fellow christian in recollecting the particulars of the sermon you have both heard; then retire, and (so far as the sermon is suited to your own spiritual state) make it the substance of your address to God. This may be done several times in the same week; hereby the sermon will of course be deeply impressed on your memory, and your stock of matter for the duty of prayer be increased.

III. When you are about to engage in prayer, let it be your common practice to read some part of the word of God, or the works of some serious writer, and spend a little time in meditating upon religious subjects; this will not only supply you with matter, but also compose your thoughts to a becoming solemnity.

IV. If, after all, you hardly know how to frame a prayer before God of yourselves, you may take a book in your hand that contains patterns of prayer; and, above all the Psalms of David, or some chapters in the New Testament: thus you may lift up your hearts to God in secret, in *short requests*, *adorations*, and *thanksgivings*, according as the verses or paragraphs you read are suited to your own circumstances.

* Suffer me to lay down two cautions about the use of scripture-language.—One is, That we should not affect too much to use words of scripture in our prayers allusively, nor in a sense very different from the true meaning of them. Not that I would utterly condemn all such allusive expressions; as for instance, that which is used when we desire mercies for our souls and bodies, “To ask the blessings of the upper and nether springs,” Joshua xv. 19. There may be some such phrases used pertinently enough; yet, if we use scriptural expressions in an allusive sense very foreign to the original purpose of them, we shall be in danger of leading ourselves into many mistakes in the interpretation of scripture.

Another caution, in using scriptural language, is this, that we abstain from all those expressions which are of a very doubtful sense, and hard to be understood; if we indulge the use of such dark sentences in prayer, we might as well pray in an unknown tongue.

cumstances. This has obtained the name of mixed prayer, and many christians have experienced great advantage from it in their secret retirement.—Bishop WILKINS says concerning secret prayer, “That it is not always necessary here, that a person should keep on in a continued frame of speech; but may sometimes make a considerable pause, wherein by meditation he may recover new matter for carrying on this duty.

Let it be remarked, that when the christian finds his mind so very barren, and unaffected with the things of religion, that he can scarce say any thing to God in prayer, and he is sensible that his dull frame is owing to his own negligence, or to some late guilt brought upon the conscience, at the same time that he earnestly pleads with God for his Spirit, he should abase himself before his offended Sovereign for this sin in particular, and implore forgiveness.

Permit me now to lay down a few directions respecting the right management of the matter of our prayers.

I. There is no necessity of our insisting upon all the parts of prayer in every address to God; though in our stated prayers there are but few of them that can well be left out. However, let us be sure to insist chiefly upon those things that are warmest in our own hearts, when they are such as the company that joins with us may properly be concerned in too.

II. We should suit the matter of our prayer to the circumstances of time, place, and persons, with, or for whom we pray.—*The time.* If it be in the morning, then we give thanks to God for preserving us through the hours of darkness, &c. In the evening we return thanks to God for the mercies of the day, &c. or when we pray on a Lord's day, or in a time of war or peace, the expressions of our prayer should be somewhat suited to the particular occasion.—*The place and persons.* If in our secret retirements, here we ought to confess our more particular sins, which
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the world knows not, and to pour out our hearts to God with great freedom and plainness. When we pray in a family, the matter must be suited to the state of the household, whether those with whom we live are sick, or lately recovered from illness, &c. In public worship, where true christians and many of a different character are present, the person who speaks in prayer should consider the circumstances of the whole congregation, and plead for suitable mercies; but I think he should not be ashamed to express his faith and hope in his address to God, where there are some to join with him, though there may be a number of hearers who cannot heartily join in these expressions; for 'tis not necessary that every worshipper should lift up his mind to God according to every sentence spoken in social prayer, but only in such as are suited to his own condition, and as he can sincerely speak to God himself.

III. Affect not to pray long, for the sake of length, since this will be attended with many inconveniences. As for instance, a person is betrayed by an affectation of long prayers into rash and unseemly expressions: let such consider the advice of Solomon. Ecclef. v. 2.—We are tempted hereby to tautologies, to say the same thing over and over again, which our Saviour highly blames. Mat. vi. 7.—Again, we shall be in danger, through an affectation of length, of tiring those who join with us.—We are likely also, by this means, to exceed the season allotted us for prayer, and to make one duty thrust out another. We are told that when Jacob wrestled with the angel, he was required to let him go, for it was break of day. Gen. xxxii. 26.—I might add, that by this affectation of length, without an equal degree of the spirit of prayer, some imprudent christians have given occasion to the irreligious to speak reproachfully of all conceived prayer.

While I am persuading young christians against that affectation of length in prayer which arises from
a desire

a desire of shewing their abilities, or from a superstitious hope of pleasing God better by saying many words, I would not have my readers imagine that the shortest prayers are always the best. Our sinful natures are too ready to put off God with a few minutes of worship, from weariness of holy things; hereby we omit a great part of the necessary work of prayer. Prayer in public assemblies should not be so short as though the only design of it were a mere preface before the sermon, or a benediction after it. In a word, prudence will teach us to determine the length of our prayers agreeable to the occasion and present circumstances, and according to the measure of our own ability for this work.

Of the METHOD of PRAYER.

METHOD is necessary in prayer, in order to secure us from confusion, and that our thoughts may not be mingled together in a disorderly manner. This also will be of use to prevent repetitions of the same thing, and is proper to stir up and maintain our own devotion and their's who join with us.

Would recommend to you these three rules :

I. Let the general and particular heads of prayer be well distinguished, and usually let generals be mentioned first, and particulars follow. For example, in *adoration* we acknowledge, that God is all glorious in his nature, clothed with honor and majesty, &c. and we mention this with the deepest reverence and abasement; and then we descend to praise him for his particular attributes of power, wisdom, goodness, &c. and exercise our particular graces accordingly. Sometimes indeed there is a beauty in summing up all the particulars at last in one general; as when we have confessed several sins, we fall down before God, acknowledging that we are covered with guilt and defilement.

II. Let

II. Let things of the same kind, for the most part, be put together in prayer. Yet I would give this limitation, that sometimes the same matter may come in naturally, under two or three parts of prayer. As the mention of some of the attributes of God under the head of *adoration*, where we praise him for his own perfections, might again be introduced under the head of *pleading for mercy*, when we use his power, wisdom, or goodness, as an argument to enforce our petitions; and under the head of *thanksgiving*, when we bless God for the benefits that proceed from these perfections. So towards the *conclusion* of prayer, it is not amiss to use a sentence or two consisting of much the same matter as may have been before mentioned, viz. to ask forgiveness of all the imperfections of our holy things, or the like. But then all this should be done with some variety of expression.

III. Let those things which are the proper objects of our judgment be first mentioned, and then those that move our affections. Though it is a very wrong custom which some persons have indulged in prayer, to run great lengths in a doctrinal way, yet there is occasion frequently under the several parts of prayer to mention divine truths, and thus lay a proper foundation on which to raise pathetical expressions. For instance, "My sins are great, and mine iniquities have many aggravations; O that I could pour out my heart before thee in sorrow."

Having laid down these general rules, the best particular method is, that division of the parts of prayer which we have already set before you, i. e. to begin your prayers with *invocation*, or *calling upon God*, then proceed to *adore* God, because of his glorious nature and perfections; next we are naturally led to the work of *confession*; here we humbly acknowledge what contemptible creatures we are in the presence of a God of such majesty; how many and
great

great our sins have been, and what are our several wants: then *petitions* for suitable blessings for our souls and bodies, and *pleading* with God naturally follow.—Next, we *resign* ourselves into the hands of God, and express our *self-dedication* to him. Afterwards we recollect the mercies we have received, both spiritual and temporal, and pay our sincere *thanksgivings* to God. At the close, as God is glorious in himself, and in his works, we *bless** him, and ascribe everlasting glory to him.—Young persons would do well to comm it to memorall these heads in order.

Though the above method be quite natural, yet it is granted that persons who have a good degree of the gift of prayer, even when they engage in public (and christians of inferior abilities in their secret retirements) are under no necessity of confining themselves to this or any other method; but in the very beginning of a prayer (if it be most suitable to the present frame of their minds, &c.) they may insist upon what usually comes in near the end, as *thanksgiving*, or *self-resignation*.

Of *EXPRESSION* in *PRAYER*.

THOUGH prayer be the proper work of the heart, yet, in the present state, in secret as well as social prayer, the language of the lips is useful in more respects than one. Words serve to awaken the holy passions

* The difference between these three parts of prayer, adoration, thanksgiving, and the doxology or blessing, is this:—

Adoration, consists chiefly in offering praise to God, because of the glorious perfections of his nature, or the greatness of his works.

Thanksgiving is the praise which is offered to God for some peculiar instances of goodness or mercy to men, and particularly to ourselves or our friends.

Doxology or *Blessing*, in its complete sense, implies not only an ascription of praise and glory, but also an acknowledgment of the dueness of it, and a desire of the eternal continuance of his honors among his creatures.

passions of the soul, as well as to express them.—They fix and engage all our powers in worship, and regulate as well as increase our devotion.—Hosea xiv. 2.

I shall lay down some directions how to attain a large treasure of expressions in prayer, and then give rules about the choice of them.

I. Besides that general acquaintance with God and yourselves, which was prescribed elsewhere, labour after a particular and lively sense of the greatness and grace of God, and of your own wants, sins, and mercies, when you are about to pray. This will furnish you with abundance of proper expressions. The passions of the mind, when they are moved, do greatly assist the tongue; yea, they almost constrain the dumb to speak. There is a remarkable instance of this in ancient history, when Atys, the son of Cræsus, who was dumb from his childhood, saw his father ready to be slain, the violence of his passion broke the bonds wherewith his tongue was tied, and he cried out to save him.

II. Pray earnestly for the gift of utterance.—The wise man tells us, Prov. xvi. 1. *That the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.*

The rules about the choice and use of proper expressions in prayer are the following.

I. Chuse those expressions that best suit your meaning: for the design of prayer is to tell God the inward thoughts of the heart; if you speak therefore what is not in the heart, it is but a solemn mockery.

II. Avoid such a way of speaking as may be unnatural and difficult to be understood, and disagreeable to those who join with you. The apostle says to the
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Corinthians concerning their public worship, 1 Cor. xiv. 9. *Except you utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?*

Avoid those expressions which are too philosophical, and which favor much of mystical divinity. As, for instance, it is not proper to say to God in public prayer, "Thou art hypostatically three, and essentially one."—"Thou art an abyss of light, a circle whose centre is every where, and its circumference no where."

Avoid a long train of dark metaphors, and expressions that are used by violent party-men.—I mean the straining of a similitude so far as to injure the doctrines of religion by a false sense, or very unbecoming expressions. Such was the language of a weak writer, who bids us, "Give our hearts to the Lord, cut them with the knife of contrition, take out the blood of our sins by confession, &c."—By expressions that favor of party-zeal, I mean such as would be offensive to christians of different judgments, who join with us in prayer. We should not (for example) in our prayers too much insist upon the corruption of doctrine and worship in any church, when some of that communion are present; nor of the infant's interest in the covenant of grace, when baptists are worshipping with us. Our prayers should not favor of anger and uncharitableness, for we are bid to *lift up holy hands without wrath*, 1 Tim. ii. 8.

Avoid length and obscurity in your sentences, and in the placing of your words; and do not interline your expressions with too many parentheses, which entangle the sense.

III. Let your language be plain, but not mean. Guard on the one hand against lofty and glittering language. Such as the following, "The beatific splendors of thy face irradiate the celestial region."

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—" *There* are the most exuberant profusions of thy "grace, &c."

Beware, on the other, of coarse and too familiar expressions, such as excite any contemptible ideas, or such as raise irreverent thoughts, or impure images in the mind. The phrases of "rolling upon Christ," "of taking a lease of Christ for all eternity," and the like, are very unseemly.—I would here desire private christians to consider, that some expressions which might appear decent an hundred years ago, would now be highly improper: for words, as well as things, grow old and uncomely.---It is therefore no sufficient apology for the present use of such expressions, if men eminent for their learning and piety have used them heretofore.---The best direction I can give you, with respect to language, is this: Make use of such language as you generally do in your serious discourses upon religious subjects.---The language of a christian in prayer, is the cloathing of his thoughts, or the dress of the soul; and it should be composed, like the dress of his body, (when in a place of public worship) decent and neat, but not pompous or gaudy.

IV. Seek after those ways of expression that are pathetic, such as have a peculiar tendency to awaken and exercise our love, hope, holy joy, &c. We should avoid (as already hinted) such a sort of stile in prayer as looks like preaching. Persons who fall into this error, want to be reminded, that prayer is not an address to men, but an address to God, which is to be performed with warmth and proper affections. There are several modes of expression that promote this end.---As,

EXCLAMATIONS, which serve to set forth an affectionate wonder. Psal. xxxi. 19. *O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!*
Psal.

Pfal. cxxxix. 17. *How precious are thy thoughts to me, O God, how great is the sum of them!*

INTERROGATIONS, when the plain sense of any thing we declare unto God is turned into a question, to make it more emphatical and affecting. Psal cxxxix. 7. *Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Whither shall I flee from thy presence?* Rom. vii. 24. *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* There is a particular sort of interrogation, fit to express not only deep dejections of the mind, but to enforce any argument in pleading with God, either for mercy for his people, or the destruction of his enemies: this is called *expostulation*. Isaiah lxiii, 17. *O Lord, why hast thou made us, [or, as it may be rendered, suffered us] to err from thy ways?* Isaiah li. 9, 10. *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, &c.* Psal. lxxviii. 7. *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?*

APPEALS TO GOD, concerning our wants or sorrows, our sincere and deep sense of the things we speak to him. *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* John xxi. 17. *My sins are not hid from thee.* Psal. lxix. 5. *My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.* Job xvi. 19.

OPTIONS OR WISHES, fit to set forth serious and earnest desires. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!* Psal. cxix. 5.

APOSTROPHES, that is, when in the midst of our addresses to God, we turn off the speech abruptly to our own souls, being led by the vehemence of some sudden devout thought. So David, Psal. xvi. 1, 2. *Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord.* In meditations, psalms, hymns, &c. our apostrophes may

may be longer; but in prayer they should be very short.

INGEMINATIONS, or redoubling our expressions, which argue an inflamed affection. Psal. cxxx. 6. *My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning.* Dan. ix. 19. *O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord hearken and do, defer not, for thine own sake, O my God.*—But here let us take care to distinguish between those repetitions that arise from real fervency of spirit, and that arise from want of matter. It is far better, at least in public prayer, to shorten the duty, than to fill up our time with constant repetitions; such as, “O Lord our God;” “if it be thy blessed will;” “we intreat thee;” “we beseech thee;” “O Lord, have mercy upon us:”—Now, though some of these expressions may properly enough be repeated several times in a prayer, yet introducing them into almost every sentence does not help our own devotion, nor their’s who join with us, but is discomposing.

Shall finish what relates to expression in prayer with observing, that as we should not confine ourselves to one set form of words, to express any particular request, so we ought not to avoid an expression, merely because we have used it in prayer heretofore. To express one thing always in the same words, would render that part of our prayers dull and unaffecting: and, on the contrary, if we give way to a perpetual affectation of new words, we shall perhaps be often driven to great impropriety of speech.

Of the VOICE in PRAYER.

THO’ the beauty of our expressions, and the tuneableness of the voice, can never render our worship more acceptable to God, the infinite Spirit; yet

yet our natures being composed of flesh and spirit, may be assisted in worship by the harmony of the voice of him who speaks. Should the matter, method, and expression be never so well chosen in prayer, it is possible for the voice to injure the devotion of our fellow worshippers.

The grand and general rule I would lay down for managing the voice in prayer is this; *Let us use the same voice with which we speak in serious conversation, especially upon affecting subjects.* For a person to use a new and different voice in his prayers, or to express a pleasurable sentence in an airy manner, and with a broad smile, will be offensive to those who hear him.

To this general rule permit me to add some particular directions.

I. Let your words be all pronounced distinct, and not made shorter by cutting off the last syllable, nor longer, by the addition of "hems and ha's, of long breaths, affected groanings, and useless sounds of coughing or spitting, &c." It is far better to make a considerable pause, and keep a decent silence, than to fall into such indecencies of sound, whereby religion is disgraced.

Observe a due medium between excessive swiftness and slowness of speech.----A due distance between your words, and proper stops between your sentences, will give the hearer time to consider what you speak, and more heartily to join with you, as well as make the work more pleasant to yourselves. On the other hand, if you are too slow, the hearers having done with the sentence you spoke last, will wait in pain for the next.

II. Let every sentence be spoken loud enough to be heard, yet none so loud as to affright or offend the ear.---In the beginning of prayer a lower voice is more becoming, as it bespeaks humility and reverence, when we enter into the presence of God.

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It is also a great convenience to the organs of speech not to arise too high at first; for it is much harder to sink again afterwards than to rise to higher accents, if need require.

With regard to the foregoing directions, let the sense of each sentence be a rule to guide your voice, whether it must be high or low, somewhat quick, or leisurely. In *invocation, adoration, confession, and self-resignation*, the voice, for the most part should be slower, and not quite so loud. But in *petitions, pleadings, thanksgivings, and rejoicing in God*, fervency and holy joy will raise the voice some degrees higher, and give it a swifter motion.

III. Let proper accents be used in speaking, and guard against the following things:---Avoid a constant uniformity of voice, that is, when every word and sentence are pronounced without any difference of sound: like a boy at school, who repeats his lesson in one dull note.---Take heed of beginning every sentence in prayer with an high voice, and ending it in a low; or of beginning each line with a deep base, and ending it with a shrill sound.---Beware of laying a great stress in pronunciation upon little words and particles, which bear but small force in the sentence. Some persons are so unhappy, that those little words --they, and that, and of, and by, shall have the greatest force of the voice bestowed upon them, whilst the expressions of chief signification are spoken with a cold and low voice.---One instance more of false pronunciation is, when we fall into a musical tone, as though we were singing instead of praying.---These several faults should be guarded against by all, who would promote the edification and pleasure of such as worship with them.

Of *G E S T U R E* in *P R A Y E R*.

IN speaking of gestures fit for worship, we shall briefly consider, first, the posture of the whole body; and secondly, of the particular parts of it.

I. Those postures of body, which the light of nature and rule of scripture, seem to dictate as most proper for prayer, are standing, kneeling, or prostration.

PROSTRATION, is sometimes used in secret prayer, when a person is under a deep sense of sin, &c.--- This we find in scripture made use of upon many occasions, Gen. xvii. 3. Jos. v. 14. Rev. xix. 10.

KNEELING, this posture hath been practised in all ages, and amongst all nations, and various instances of it are to be met with in the sacred writings, 2 Chron. vi. 13. Ezra ix. 5. Dan. vi. 10. Luke xxii. 41.

STANDING, is also a posture proper for this worship. Our Saviour says to his disciples, *when ye stand praying*, Mark xi. 25. The publican stood and prayed, Luke xviii. 13. Standing seems to have been the gesture of worship amongst the Jews*, in a large assembly, 2 Chron. xx. 4, 5, 13. and a learned author† has shewn it to be the usual practice of the first ages of the christian church.

However, it seems proper to conform to the custom of those with whom we worship, whether standing or kneeling, as each of these gestures expresses humility, and neither of them are made absolutely necessary by the word of God.

* Vid. Dr. Lightfoot's *Hor. Heb.* on Mat. vi. 5.

† See *An Enquiry into the Worship of the Primitive Church*, chap. ii. § 1.

But I cannot think that sitting, or other postures of rest, ought to be indulged in our stated and solemn seasons of prayer, unless persons are in any respect infirm or aged, or the prayer be drawn out to such a length as to make it painful and discomposing to the mind to keep in one posture.---Pious ejaculations, or short addresses to Heaven (to which some devout christians, like David*, may often find themselves disposed), with respect to these, there can be no posture of the body improper.

II. The posture of the several parts of the body, that are most agreeable to worship, may be thus enumerated.

As for the head, let it be kept generally without motion. To shake the head in prayer has a very disagreeable appearance.---In cases of great humiliation, the hanging down of the head is indeed no improper method to express that temper of mind. Nehem. viii. 6. But in our expressions of hope and joy, it is natural to lift up the head. Luke xxi. 28. I might also mention the apostle's advice, that he who prays ought to have his head uncovered, 1 Cor. xi. 4.

In divine worship the whole countenance should be composed to gravity and solemnity, to express a reverence of the majesty of God, and the high importance of the work wherein we are engaged.---Tho' whilst we are confessing sin, melancholy may be suffered to appear in our faces; and, on the other hand, marks of sacred joy, when we give thanks to God for his mercies; yet still the characters of the countenance should fall below the inward affections of the mind.---We should have a care of all disagreeable distortions of the face, as it were to squeeze out our words, or our tears, Mat. vi. 16. at the same time we should avoid careless and drowsy gestures, which

* Psal. cxix, 55.

which discover the sloth of the mind, Jer. xlviii. 10.

To lift up the eyes to Heaven is very natural in prayer, Psal. cxxi. 1. and cxxiii. 1. --Guard against a roving eye in this duty, which not only looks irreverent, but may perhaps break the chain of our thoughts; or lead away our hearts from God by means of that or the other object. Upon these accounts some persons have found it most agreeable to keep their eyes closed in prayer.

The lifting up of the hands, sometimes folded together, or sometimes apart, is a very natural expression of our seeking help from God; Psal. xxviii. 2. and cxxxiv. 2.

As the elevation of the hands to Heaven is a very proper gesture when one prays for himself; so when a superior prays for a blessing to descend upon an inferior, it is natural to lay his hand upon the head of the person: this we find practised in ancient times. It is true indeed the laying on of hands was used by the prophets and apostles, when they pronounced authoritative divine blessings upon men, and communicated miraculous gifts. But I esteem it not so much a peculiar right belonging to the prophetic benediction, as it is a *natural* expression of the desire of the divine favor from one person to another; and therefore when a person is devoted to God in any solemn office, whilst prayers are made for a divine blessing to descend upon him, imposition of hands seems a gesture of nature; and, considered in itself, I cannot think it either unlawful or necessary.*

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* It is the observation of a late writer, that miraculous gifts were not always conferred, even when the apostles laid their hands on persons: for Acts vi. 6. they are said to have prayed, and laid their hands upon the seven deacons, who were already full of the Holy Spirit, ver. 3. And the prophets at Antioch fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul; to whom the Lord Jesus Christ had appeared at Jerusalem, and communicated the Holy Spirit immediately, and in the greatest plenty. Compare Acts xi. 30. xii. 25. xiii. 2, 3. with Acts xxiii. 17, &c. and 2 Corinth. xii. 4, 5, 6. Gal. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9.

With regard to the other parts of the body, almost all motions should be avoided. If we give way to various movements or noise made by the hands, feet, or any other parts, it will tempt some to think that our minds are not very intensely engaged; or at least it will appear so familiar and bold a behaviour, as we would scarce be guilty of in the presence of our superiors here on Earth.

I shall conclude what relates to the gift of prayer, with some heads of advice addressed more especially to the young.

I. Observe those ministers and private christians who excel with regard to matter, method, expression, &c. and endeavour to imitate them. At the same time take notice of all the irregularities and indecencies that any persons are guilty of in this part of worship, not indeed with a view to make unkind remarks to others, but in order to avoid them yourselves.

II. Intreat the assistance of some judicious acquaintance, to give you notice of your own faults in prayer; and esteem those the most valuable of your friends who will put themselves to the trouble of giving you a modest hint of your imperfections. For want of this, some persons in their youth have gained so ill an habit of speaking in public, as hath exposed the worship of God to contempt, and hindered the edification of those who join with them.

III. Use all proper means to obtain courage in religious performances. To this end, make religious conversation your practice; agreeable to a foregoing hint, talk over seriously one with another, at proper seasons, the sermons you have heard, those parts of the word of God you have lately read, the books of divinity with which you have been conversant, and your own experiences of divine things, Ps.
lxvi.

ixvi. 16. but here, I confess, you must proceed with great care, as you are in danger of spiritual pride* ; —Exercise the gift of prayer for some considerable time in secret, before you begin in public; and take heed that your hearts be well prepared, and let the matter of your prayer be duly premeditated in the first years of your practice of this duty.

Strive to maintain upon your mind a much greater awe of the majesty of that God to whom you speak, than of the opinion of those fellow-creatures with whom you worship.

Make your first essays in the company of a few of your most intimate, serious and candid acquaintance; or join in society with some young christians of equal standing, and set apart times for prayer together, which is an excellent way to obtain this gift.

Do not aim at length of prayer in your younger attempts, but rather be short; and if your first experiments are unsuccessful, let not this discourage you: many a christian has in time excelled in the gift of prayer, who in their early essays have been very defective.

I add—Importunately beg of God that you may be endowed with christian courage. By these means you are like to attain readiness in this sacred exercise.

* It is the genius of some who profess acquaintance with God and Christ, when they feel delicious spiritual joys, to report them to others, without any great occasion for it, and to blaze them every where.—They love that others should know how nobly they are treated; and so they lay a double snare: *one* for themselves, by the high conceit which they may raise in their fellow-creatures of their excellencies; and a *second* for their neighbours, by the discouragement they may feel for want of such elevations.—You know that when our Lord was transfigured in the holy mount, the brightness wherewith he was clothed he commanded to be concealed as a great secret, till a fit season to divulge it. Mat. xvii. 9. This may teach us to keep to ourselves what passes between God and our own souls, till we apprehend that the good of others make it necessary that it should be revealed. Bishop Patrick's Pilgrim, p. 132.

CHAPTER II.

*Of the GRACE of PRAYER.**

IN the foregoing chapter have finished what I proposed concerning the external parts of prayer; I proceed now to take a short view of the internal and spiritual part of that duty; and this has been usually called *the grace of prayer*, &c.

Here shall endeavour to explain what it means, and shew how properly the term is used: afterward shall particularly mention what are those inward and spiritual exercises of the mind, which are required in the duty of prayer, and then give directions how to attain them.

SECTION I.

What the GRACE of PRAYER is, and how it differs from the GIFT.

GRACE, in its most general sense, implies the free and undeserved favor of one person towards another that is esteemed his inferior; and, in the language of the New Testament, it is usually put to signify the favor and mercy of God towards sinful creatures, which, upon all accounts, is acknowledged to be free and undeserved. Now, because our natures are averse to what is good, and when they are inclined to
God

* This and the following chapter are an abridgment of Dr. Watts, "On the Grace and Spirit of Prayer."

God and divine things, this is done by the power of God working in us; therefore this very change of nature is called in the common language of christians by the name of *grace*.

The word *grace* denotes good dispositions, with a peculiar regard to God as their principle, intimating that they proceed from his favor.

Sometimes this word is used in a comprehensive sense, to signify the whole train of christian virtues, or the universal habit of holiness; Joh. i. 16. *Of his fullness have all we received grace.* 2 Pet. iii. 18. *Grow in grace.* We say such a one is truly gracious, that is, he is a man of religion and virtue. Sometimes it is used in its singular sense, and means any one holy inclination or principle in the mind. So we say the grace of faith, the grace of repentance, the grace of hope, or love; 2 Cor. viii. 7.—*Therefore as ye abound in faith,---knowledge,---in your love to us, see that you abound in this grace also,* viz. liberality. Sometimes it is used in a sense a little more enlarged, but not universal, and it implies all those pious qualifications that belong to any one action or duty: so we read of the grace that belongs to conversation, Coloss. iv. 6. The grace of singing, Col. iii. 16. And the grace of prayer, Zech. xii. 10.

The *grace* of prayer, in the common acceptation, is not any one single act, or habit of the mind, but it implies all those holy dispositions of soul, which are to be exercised in that part of divine worship. Hence will appear the great difference that is between the gift and grace of prayer.

The *gift* chiefly consists in a readiness of thought, agreeable to the several parts of prayer, and an easy manner of expressing those thoughts in speaking to God. The *grace* consists merely in the inward workings of the heart and conscience toward God and religion.

The gift and grace are many times separated from one another; and it hath been often found that the
gift

gift of prayer has been attained in a great degree by study and practice, and by the common operations of the Spirit of God, communicated to some persons that have appeared to be void of true grace. There may be also the grace of prayer in lively exercise in those who have but a very small degree of the gift; and that hardly know how to form their thoughts and desires into a regular method, or to express them in tolerable language. But where the gift and the grace meet together, such a christian brings honor to God, and has a greater capacity and prospect of edifying and comforting others.

Those acts of the sanctified soul in all its powers, which are put forth in the duty of prayer, may properly be called so many graces of the Holy Spirit, drawn forth into exercise. And of these *some* belong to the whole work of prayer, and *others* are peculiar to the several parts of the duty.

SECTION II.

General GRACES of PRAYER.

THE graces that belong to the whole work or duty of prayer, are such as these:

I. Faith, or the belief of the being of God, his perfect knowledge, and his gracious notice of all that we speak in prayer. This rule the apostle gives, Heb. xi. 6. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of all that diligently seek him. We should endeavour to impress our minds with a lively belief of God's existence, by attentively viewing the works of nature, as we have opportunity.

It has been justly observed, that if we take but even a slight survey of this lower world itself, we shall see an admirable correspondence between its parts; however different they are, yet every one is fitted to

to another, and to all the rest, so as to make the whole a convenient dwelling place for the several tribes of animals which live upon it, and for mankind especially. Thus, as the apostle speaks, *The invisible things of him* (viz. God) *from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead,* Rom. i. 20. The same inspired writer argues the present point in the following easy and conclusive way: *Every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God,* Heb. iii. 4. As if he had said, “Does the meanest house declare itself to be “the work of some skilful architect? and does it “not much more evidently appear that this commodious and magnificent structure (the world) must “have been planned and reared by proportionable “wisdom and power?” As the various objects around us bear eminent marks of a divine hand, so likewise the curious frame of our own bodies, and the noble faculties of our souls do loudly proclaim the being and perfections of God.—This is a truth therefore that has been generally acknowledged by mankind in all ages, a truth so deeply impressed upon the human heart, that even profest atheists themselves, in a time of danger, have earnestly prayed to that God whose being they pretended a little before to deny; thus they have shewn their belief, not only of the divine existence, but also of the over-ruling providence of God.—It will be very proper to commit these plain arguments to memory, and to recollect them when about to engage in the duty of prayer.

II. Gravity and seriousness of spirit. When we speak to the great Creator (who must also be our judge) about concerns of infinite and everlasting moment, we ought to have our souls clothed with solemnity, and not to assume those airs which are lawful

ful at other seasons, when we talk with our fellow-creatures about meaner affairs; Gen. xviii. 27.

III. Heavenly-mindedness should run through the whole of this duty. Psal. iv. 6, 7. Coloss. iii. 1. For prayer is a retirement from Earth, and a retreat from our fellow-creatures to attend on God, and hold converse with him that dwells in Heaven.—Therefore, though it is true that God permits us to converse with him about many of our temporal affairs in prayer, yet we should take care that the things of our souls and the eternal world, always possess the chief room in our hearts. And whatsoever cares of this life are spread before the Lord, let us see that we desire earthly comforts only so far as these are consistent with the honor of God, and our everlasting interest. 1 Cor. x. 31.

IV. Sincerity is another grace that must run thro' this worship; Joh. iv. 24. Whether we speak to God concerning his own glories, whether we give him thanks for his abundant goodness, or confess our various iniquities before him, or express our desires of mercy at his hand, still let our hearts and lips agree, and not be found mockers of God.

V. Holy watchfulness and intention of mind upon every part of the duty in which we are engaged; our thoughts must not be suffered to wander among the creatures, and rove to the ends of the Earth, when we come to converse with the high and holy God. Without this watchfulness our worship will become formal, and we shall find coldness and indifference creeping upon our spirits, and spoiling the success of our duties. Watch unto prayer, is a direction of the great apostle, Col. iv. 2..

SECTION III.

GRACES that belong to the particular Parts of PRAYER.

THE graces that peculiarly belong to the several parts of prayer, are distinguished according to the parts of this duty; viz.

I. Invocation, or calling upon God, requires a special awe of his majesty to attend it, and a deep sense of our own meanness and unworthiness; and at the same time we should express holy wonder and pleasure, that the most high God, who inhabits eternity, will suffer such beings as we are to hold converse with him.

II. The work of adoration or praise runs through the several attributes of the divine nature, and requires of us the exercise of our various affections suited to those several attributes. As when we mention God's self-sufficiency and independence, it becomes us to be humble, and acknowledge our dependance: when we speak of his power and wisdom, we should abase ourselves before him, because of our weakness and folly, as well as stand in holy admiration at the infinity of those glories of God. When we mention his love and compassion; our affections should go forth strongly towards him. When we think of his justice, we should have an holy awe upon our spirits, suited to the presence of the just and dreadful God. And the thought of his forgiveness should awaken us to hope and joy.

III. In the confession of our sorrows and sins, humility is a necessary grace, and deep contrition of soul, in the presence of that God whose laws we have broken, whose gospel we have abused, whose majesty we have affronted, and whose vengeance we

have deserved. Here all the springs of repentance should be set open, and we should mourn for sin, even at the same time that we hope it is forgiven. Shame and self-indignation, and holy revenge against the corruptions of our hearts, should be awakened also in this part of prayer.

IV. In our petitions we should raise our desires to such different degrees of fervency, as the nature of our requests makes necessary. When we pray for spiritual blessings, we cannot be too warm in our desires. But when we seek the mercies of this life, the degree of fervency should be abated, for it is possible that we may be happy, and yet go without many of the comforts of the present state.—Submission is here required.

While we make intercession for our friends, or enemies, we ought to feel in ourselves warm love, and lively compassion; and when we pray for the church of Christ, we should animate all our expressions with a burning zeal for his glory, and tenderness for our fellow-christians.

V. Pleading with God calls for humble importunity: for the arguments that we use with God, in pleading with him, are but the various forms of importunate request. But because we are only creatures, and we speak to God, humility ought to mingle with every one of our arguments. Our pleadings with him should be so expressed as always to carry in them that decency and distance that becomes creatures in the presence of their Maker. In pleading also we are required to exercise faith in the promises of the gospel, faith in the name of Christ Jesus our Mediator, faith in the mercies of God, according to the discoveries he hath made of himself in his word. We are called to believe that he is a God hearing prayer, and will bestow upon us what we seek, so far as is necessary for his glory and
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our salvation : Heb. xi. 6. Here too the grace of hope comes into exercise ; for while we trust the promises, we hope for the things promised. We must direct our prayer unto God, and look up, as David, Psal. v. 3.

VI. In that part of prayer which is called profession, or self-resignation, great humility is again required ; a sweet submission to God's will, a composedness of spirit under his determinations, even tho', for reasons of infinite wisdom and love, he withhold from us the particular comforts that we seek. Here let patience have its perfect exercise, and let the soul continue in an humble frame, waiting upon God. As we give ourselves up to God, a steadiness of mind should attend it, and the firmest courage of heart against all oppositions ; while we confirm our self-dedications to the Lord.

VII. In thanksgiving a most hearty gratitude and love is required ; and a readiness to return unto God (to the uttermost of our capacities), according to the variety and riches of his goodness and grace towards us. Here also, with holy wonder, we acknowledge the condescension of God, to bestow such favors upon us so unworthy ; and this wonder should arise and grow up into divine joy, whilst we bless him for the benefits of this life, and for an interest in redeeming love. And in our thanksgivings we should be sure to take notice of all merciful appearances of God in answer to our requests ; otherwise our converse with him will be very deficient.

VIII. When we bless God, we should shew an earnest desire after the honor of his name, and our souls should breathe fervently after the accomplishment of those promises wherein he hath engaged to spread his own honors and to magnify his own name, and the name of his Son ; we should, as it were, exult

ult and triumph in those glories, which God, our God, possesses, and rejoice to think that he shall ever possess them.

Then we conclude the whole prayer with our *Amen* of sincerity and of faith, in one short word expressing over again our adorations, confessions, and petitions; trusting and hoping for the audience of our prayers, and acceptance of our persons, from whence we should take encouragement to rise from this duty with a sweet composure of mind, and maintain a joyful and heavenly frame, as those that have been with God.

But, lest some pious and humble persons should be discouraged, when they find not these lively exercises of faith, hope, love, fervency of desire, and divine delight in worship, and thence conclude that they have not the grace of prayer; I would add this caution, viz. That all the graces of prayer are seldom at work in the soul at once, in an eminent and sensible degree; sometimes one prevails more, and sometimes another, in this imperfect state; and when a christian comes before God with much deadness of heart, burdened with worldly thoughts, and feels great backwardness to the duty of private prayer, and falls down before God, condemning himself, and with sighs and deep groans makes known his case and his sins to God; though he can speak but few words before him, such a frame and temper of mind will be approved of by that God who judges the secrets of the heart, and makes most compassionate allowances for the infirmity of our flesh.

SECTION IV.

Directions for attaining the GRACE of PRAYER.

IN order to direct us in the spiritual performance of this duty, we must consider it is an holy converse maintained between Earth and Heaven, betwixt the great and holy God, and mean and sinful creatures. Now the most natural rules that I can think of, to carry on this converse, are such as these :

I. Direction. Possess your hearts with a most affecting sense of the characters of the two parties that are to maintain this correspondence; that is, God and yourselves. This indeed is one direction for the gift of prayer, but it is also most necessary to attain the grace. Let us consider who this glorious Being is, that invites us to this fellowship with himself;—how awful in majesty! how strict in righteousness! how irresistible in power! how unsearchable in wisdom! how all-sufficient in blessedness! how condescending in mercy!—Let us also consider, who are we that are invited to this correspondence:—how mean in our original! how guilty in our hearts and lives! how needy of every blessing! how utterly incapable of helping ourselves! and how miserable for ever, if we are without God.

And if we have sincerely obeyed the call of the gospel, and have attained to some comfortable hope of God's love; let us consider, how infinite are our obligations to him, and how necessary and delightful it is to enjoy his visits here, with whom it will be our happiness to dwell forever. When we feel our spirits deeply impressed with such thoughts as these, we are in the best frame, and most likely way to pray with grace in our hearts.

II. Direction. When you come before God, remember the nature of this correspondence, it is all spiritual;

spiritual; remember the dignity and privilege, the design and importance of it. A sense of the high favor, in being admitted to this privilege and honor, will fill your souls with humble wonder, and with heavenly joy, such as becomes the worshippers and favourites of an infinite God. A due attendance to the design and importance of this duty, will fix your thoughts to the most immoveable attention, overspread your spirit with seriousness, and raise your desires to holy fervency. You pray to him that hath power *to save and to destroy*, about your eternal destruction, or eternal salvation; and if eternity, with all its awful attendants, will not awaken some of the graces of prayer, the soul must be in a very stupid frame.

III. Direction. Seek earnestly a state of reconciliation with that God with whom you converse; labour after a good hope and assurance of his friendship. Now, in order to attain this friendship, approach unto God in prayer through Jesus the Mediator: Joh. xiv. 6.

IV. Direction. Maintain always a praying frame; and rest not satisfied till you find pleasure in prayer. Whatever opportunities you enjoy for social prayer, do not neglect constantly praying in secret.

When you join with others in prayer, where you are not the speaker, let your heart be kept intent to the work.

Take frequent occasion, in the short intervals between your worldly affairs, to lift up your souls to God. Thus you may *pray without ceasing*, as the Apostle directs; and your graces may be ever lively. Whereas, if you only make your addresses to God in the morning and evening, and forget him all the day, your hearts will grow indifferent and formal in worship.

CHAPTER III.

Of the SPIRIT of PRAYER.

ALL the rules that have hitherto been laid down, in order to teach us to pray, will be ineffectual, unless we have divine aids. If therefore we would attain the gift or grace of prayer, we are to seek both from Heaven; and since the mercies of God of this kind, are usually attributed to the Holy Spirit, he may very properly be called the Spirit of prayer; and, as such, his assistance is to be sought with diligence and importunity.—The Spirit of prayer, indeed, in our language, may sometimes signify a temper of mind well furnished for this sacred work.

My business now is to prove, by plain and easy arguments, that the Spirit of God doth assist his people in prayer. Then to shew what his assistances are, and how far they extend, that we may not expect *more* from him than scripture promises, nor attribute *too little* to his influences: and after a few cautions laid down, shall proceed to give some directions how the aid of the Holy Spirit may be obtained.

SECTION I.

Proofs of the ASSISTANCE of the SPIRIT of GOD in PRAYER.

THE methods of proof which I shall use are these three:—Express texts of scripture.—Collateral texts.—The experience of christians.

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I. The first argument is drawn from such express texts of scripture as these :

Zech. xii. 10. *I will pour upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications.*—This promise, which refers to the Jews at the time of their conversion, belongs also to believers amongst us Gentiles, as appears from Gal. iii. 14.

Luke xi. 13. After Christ had answered the request of his disciples, and taught them how to pray, by giving them a pattern of prayer, he recommends them to ask his Father for the Holy Spirit, in order to a further instruction in the work of prayer. This the whole context seems to intimate.

Rom. viii. 26. *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us* with groanings that cannot be uttered,* raising in our minds those holy and fervent desires which we are unable to express.

James v. 16. Which we translate *the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous.* In the original it is, *δενσις ενεργημεν*, *the inwrought prayer*, or prayer wrought in true christians by the good Spirit that possesses and guides them. The word *ενεργημεν* is used in this sense in 1 Cor. xii. 11.

Jude ver. 20, 21. *Praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God.* This epistle is written to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, ver. 1. They are all directed to pray by the assistance of the Holy Ghost; and those who have not this Spirit, in ver. 19, are said to be *sensual*. See moreover Ephes. ii. 18.

Do not the above passages of scripture plainly shew, that though the gifts of prayer, by immediate inspiration, bestowed upon the apostles and others,

* Maketh intercession for us,—or, as some chuse to translate it,—Manages affairs for us; seeing the office of an intercessor with God is so peculiarly that of Christ; Joh. ii. 1.

thers, are not now to be expected, yet still there are certain aids of the Spirit (explained in the following section) attainable by christians in all ages.

II. The second argument for the aids of the holy Spirit in prayer, is drawn from collateral scriptures; such are those texts which represent the blessed Spirit as the spring of what is good in us, and prove that all other duties of the christian life are to be performed in, and by this Spirit. Saints are *born of the Spirit*; Joh. iii. 6. *Are led by the Spirit*; Rom. viii. 14. *Walk in the Spirit*, Gal. v. 16. *Live in the Spirit*, ver. 25. By this Spirit *mortify the deeds of the body*, Rom. viii. 13. and we are told, ver. 16. *The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*

III. The third argument to prove that the Spirit of God doth sometimes assist men in the work of prayer is, the experience of christians with regard to the *grace* of prayer, and many christians in the exercise of the *gift* of it too. The great difference that is between some believers and others in this respect, even where their natural abilities are equal; and the difference between believers themselves at different times and seasons, seems to denote the presence or absence of the holy Spirit. Some persons at special seasons will break out into a divine rapture in prayer, and be carried far beyond themselves: their thoughts, language, and every thing that belongs to their prayer, seems to have something of heaven in it.—I will allow that in certain persons this may be ascribed to a great degree of understanding, invention, fancy, memory, natural affections of the mind, and volubility of the tongue: but many times also it shall be observed, that those who have this gift of prayer in exercise, do not excell nor equal the rest of their neighbours in fancy, invention, passion, or eloquence; it may be

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they are persons of very mean parts, and below the common capacity of mankind.

Nor can it be always imputed to a warm imagination, at those times they are carried out in prayer beyond themselves; for this happens when they find their natural spirits not raised, but the powers of nature labour, perhaps, under a decay, and they can hardly speak or think about common affairs.

SECTION II.

How the SPIRIT assists us in PRAYER.

WE have endeavoured to prove that there is such a thing as the assistance of the Spirit of God in the work of prayer; but how far this assistance extends is a subject of inquiry.

I think those persons expect *too much* from the Spirit in our day,

I. Who wait for all their inclinations to pray, from immediate and present dictates of the Spirit of God. I find in scripture frequent exhortations to pray, and a command to pray* without ceasing, 1 Thes. v. 17, that is to pray upon all proper occasions; but I find no encouragement to expect the holy Spirit will, by sudden and immediate impulses in a sensible way, dictate to me every season of prayer. Therefore though the Spirit of God should sometimes withdraw himself in his influence, yet my duty to constant prayer still remains.

II. Those who expect such aids of the holy Spirit, as to make their prayers become the proper work of
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* Here may be an allusion to the burnt-offering presented every morning and evening, which is called *perpetual*, Levit. vi. 20. compare Luk. xxiv. 53; with Acts ii. 46, 47. See Dodrig. Fam. Exposit.

inspiration. Let us not be so fond as to persuade ourselves that the aids of the holy Spirit given to ministers or others, while they teach or pray, arise to the character of those miraculous gifts that were given to the apostles and primitive believers; such as are described in the church of Corinth, 1 Corinth. xii. 8, &c. and elsewhere. For at those times a whole sermon, or a whole prayer, was a constant impulse of the holy Spirit, perhaps for the words, as well as the matter of it, which made it truly divine. But in our prayers, the Spirit of God leaves us much to ourselves, to mingle many defects with our duties, both in the matter, manner, and words; so that we cannot say of one whole sentence, that it is the perfect work of the Spirit.

III. Those who hope for such influences of the Spirit as to render their own study and labours needless; who never have given diligence to furnish themselves in a rational way with an ability to pray, upon presumption of those divine impulses; nor upon any occasion will meditate before hand, but rush upon the duty.—These persons, I say, certainly expect too much from the holy Spirit. In vindication of themselves, they will cite perhaps the text which was addressed to the disciples, Mat. x. 9.—*When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.* But this text has quite another design. It may be questioned whether this promise of Christ forbids *them* all premeditation, but only an anxious care, as we are bid to *take no thought for the morrow*, Mat. vi. 34. that is, “Be not over solicitous or disquieted about provision for to-morrow.” But if Christ did utterly forbid them all preparation, yet that command and promise to the apostles in miraculous times, when they should appear before magistrates, can never be given to encourage the sloth
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of every common christian in our day, when he appears in worship before God.

Having diligently consulted the word of God, I am ready to conclude, that the most considerable and common assistance in prayer, which is peculiarly attributed to the blessed Spirit, as a Spirit of prayer, and may be expected from him in our day, chiefly consists in this.—He composes our minds, gives us secret hints of our real wants, and brings to our remembrance some scriptural arguments and promises to plead with God; Rom. viii. 26, 27.—He withdraws the heart more from the world, and raises it to things divine, Psal. lxxx. 18. li. 12. He awakens the graces of love, fear, hope, and joy, that are suited to this duty; and it may be chiefly upon this account that he is called, “The Spirit of grace and supplication,” Zech. xii. 10. When these are raised to an high degree, the heart will have a natural influence upon the invention, the memory, the language, and the voice. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak. And, for the most part, the utterance will be proportionable to the degree of inward affection, and to the natural and acquired abilities of the person who prays; excepting some rare instances, where men are carried beyond themselves, by the uncommon presence of the Spirit.

S E C T I O N III.

CAUTIONS about the INFLUENCES of the SPIRIT.

I. **C**Aution. Do not believe all manner of urgent impressions of the mind to go and pray, proceed from the Spirit.

For instance, when we are engaged in some other business that is the proper duty of that season. Now the blessed Spirit draws us to God at a fit season, so
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as not to set aside another necessary duty toward God or man.

II. Caution. Do not expect the influences of the Spirit in prayer should be so vehement and sensible, as certainly to distinguish them from the motions of your own spirits; for the Spirit of God generally acts towards his people, agreeable to the dispensation under which they are, either in a more sensible, or imperceptible way. Under the Old Testament, the Spirit of God often carried the prophets away, as if it were in an extasy beyond themselves; their stile, their gesture, as well as inward commotions of heart, were frequently different from the common manner of men, and did sufficiently evidence to themselves, and in some measure to others also, that they were under the impressions of the holy Spirit at special seasons.

Under the New Testament, the apostles had a more constant and habitual assistance of the Spirit, tho' it was also extraordinary; in a calmer way they were influenced in prayer and preaching more agreeable to rational nature; yet, without doubt, they themselves well knew when they were under the certain conduct of the holy Spirit.

In our day, when we have no reason to expect extraordinary inspirations, the Spirit of God usually leads us in so soft and silent a manner, agreeable to the temper of our own spirits, and concurrent circumstances of life, that his operations are not to be easily distinguished by ourselves or others, from the rational motions of our own hearts, influenced by moral arguments; though by the favor and relish of divine things that we then feel in our souls, and the consequent fruits of holiness in our hearts and lives, we know we had some assistance from the blessed Spirit. Such are his operations generally in conversion, sanctification, and consolation.

III. Caution. Though we have no sure ground to expect extraordinary influences from the Spirit of prayer in our day, yet we ought not to deny them utterly; for God hath no where bound himself not to bestow them: the chief ends for which immediate inspiration was given, are long ceased among us where the gospel is so well established; yet there have not been wanting instances in every age of some extraordinary testimonies of the Spirit to the truth of the gospel, both for conviction of unbelievers, and for the instruction, encouragement, and comfort of true christians.

In the conversion of a sinner, the Spirit's work is usually gradual, and begun and carried on by providences, sermons, occasional thoughts, and moral arguments, from time to time, 'till at last the man is become a new creature. Yet there seem to be now and then surprising conversions wrought by the extraordinary influences of the holy Spirit, something like the conversion of St. Paul.

In the consolation of saints, the Spirit generally assists their own minds in comparing their hearts with the rule of the word, and makes it appear they are the children of God, by finding the characters of adoption in themselves; this is his ordinary way of witnessing, and that safe way in which the believer is to seek for solid comfort; but I think there are instances when the Spirit of God hath in a more immediate manner spoken consolation, and this hath been evidenced to be divine, by the christian's increased humility and greater readiness to every good work.

So it is in prayer. The ordinary assistances of the Spirit, given in our day to ministers, imply no more than what I have described in the foregoing chapter: but are there not instances wherein the Spirit of God hath carried a devout person in worship far beyond his own natural and acquired powers, and raised him to an uncommon and exalted degree of
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the exercise of praying graces, very near to those divine impulses which the primitive christians enjoyed?

If a minister in a public assembly has been enabled to spread the cases of the whole congregation before the Lord in such expressive language, that almost every one present hath been ready to confess, surely he knew my heart; if sinners have been converted in numbers, and saints made triumphant in grace, I should not be afraid to say, "Surely God is present in this place with the extraordinary power and influence of his Spirit."

If a christian hath been taught by this Spirit making intercession in him, to plead with God for some particular mercy in such an unusual strain of humble and heavenly argument, that he has found inward assurances that the mercy should be bestowed, by something of a prophetic impulse, and has never been mistaken; I should not forbear to believe the extraordinary presence of the Spirit of prayer with him at that season. Doctor *Winter* in *Ireland*, and several ministers and primitive christians of the last age in *Scotland*, have been esteemed glorious instances hereof. If a serious and humble worshipper, who hath been long seeking after the knowledge of some divine truth, should find himself enlightened upon his knees with an heavenly beam shining upon that truth with most peculiar evidence, and teaching him more in one prayer than he had learned by months of labour and study, I should venture to acknowledge the immediate aids and answers of the Spirit of prayer and illumination. *Luther* is said to have enjoyed such divine favors, at the reformation of the church from popish darkness.

If a good man hath been conflicting with doubts and fears, and waiting upon God in all his appointed ways, seeking comfort; if while he hath been at the throne of grace, he has beheld God reconciled, and as it were seen the work of God in his own heart in a convincing light; and perhaps by some comfortable word
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of scripture impreſt on his mind, hath been aſſured of his love to God, and the love of God to him; if from that immediate ſenſation of divine love he has been filled with, joy unſpeakable and full of glory, and warmed with heavenly zeal for the honor of God, and the happineſs of mankind, I muſt believe ſuch a one to be ſealed as a child of God, by the influence of the Spirit of adoption, teaching him to cry Abba, Father.

But concerning ſuch operations of the Spirit as theſe are, becauſe there have been many vain pretences to them, I would make three remarks.

First, Theſe are rare inſtances, and beſtowed by the Spirit of God, according to the ſecret counſels of his own wiſdom, that no particular chriſtian hath any ſure ground to expect them.

Second, They are beſt diſtinguiſhed from the mere effects of a warm fancy, and the ſpirit of deluſion, not ſo much by the brightneſs and vehemence of the preſent impreſſion, as by their agreeableneſs to the ſtanding rule of the word of God, and their influence towards humility and growing holineſs.

There is therefore the ſame rule to judge of the uncommon, as well as the common aſſiſtances of the holy Spirit.

Third, How near ſoever theſe extraordinary impuſes come to the inſpiration of the Apoſtles and firſt chriſtians in the truth and power of them, yet they fall far ſhort in the diſtinct evidence; for the Spirit of God hath not taught us ſo far to diſtinguiſh any particular parts or paragraphs, even of ſuch an extraordinary prayer, as that any one can ſay, theſe are perfect divine inſpirations; becauſe he would have nothing ſtand in competition with his written word, as the rule of our faith and practice.

IV. Caution. Do not make the gift of prayer the meaſure of your judgment concerning the Spirit of prayer.

prayer. If we follow this rule, there are three cases where we may be led into mistake.

First, When the gift is in very lively exercise.—Have a care of believing that all those persons pray by the Spirit who pronounce pious expressions with great seeming fervency, and much volubility of speech; when, it may be, their character is exceedingly sinful in the sight of God.

Much less can we suppose that noisy gesture, a distorted countenance, violence and vociferation are any signs of the divine Spirit. Sometimes truly extraordinary anguish of mind, or inward fervor of affection, have extorted from good men groanings and loud complaints. *David* at times practised this, as appears by his psalms. *Jesus Christ* himself, when pressed with sorrows heavier than man could bear, offered strong cries and tears, Heb. v. 7. But nevertheless there may be a great noise, and violent commotions used to make a shew of fervency, and with a design to make up the want of inward devotion. God himself was indeed present at *Sinai* with thunder and lightning, and the sound of a trumpet, Exod. xix. But when he came down to visit *Elijah*, he was not in the earthquake, nor in the tempest, but in the still small voice, 1 Kings xix. 11, 12.

I would not impute the difference between the prayers of one minister and another, one private christian and another, merely to the presence or absence of the holy Spirit. Natural constitutions, capacities, acquirements, natural affections, and providential circumstances can make a great difference. Nor would I impute the difference between the prayers of the same true christians at different seasons only to the unequal assistances of the holy Spirit; for many other things may concur to make them more or less cold or fervent in the exercise of the gift of prayer.

The second case wherein we may be in danger of mistake is, where there is but a small measure of the

gift of prayer. How ready are some persons to judge the *Spirit* of prayer is absent from the heart of that man who speaks to God, if he hath but a mean *gift*.

Now, though such as have so very small a talent should not be forward to pray in a great assembly, or among strangers, 'till by practice in a private way they have attained more of this sacred skill; yet there may be much of the Spirit of prayer in their hearts. Perhaps they are young christians lately converted, and are but beginning to learn to pray. And natural bashfulness may sometimes hinder the exercise of a good gift in prayer.

Or it may be they have very low natural parts, a poor invention and memory, want of words, or some difficulty in their common way of expressing themselves about other affairs.

Or perhaps they have long disused themselves from praying in public, therefore at first, when they are called to it again, they may be much at a loss as to the *gift* of prayer, though *grace* may be advancing in the soul.

Or they are overwhelmed with fears of divine desertion, or wrestling hard with some strong temptation, or under a present depression of mind by some heavy sorrow, and may be in the case of *David*, when he was so troubled that he could not speak, Psal. lxxvii. 4.

After all, God may with-hold from some persons the usual aids of the Spirit in prayer to punish them for a neglected duty; and particularly for carelessness in seeking after this holy ability of speaking to God.

Sometimes it may happen that the Spirit of prayer is communicated in a great degree to an humble christian, who falls into many thoughtless indecencies of gesture; or delivers his sentences with a most unhappy tone of voice, for want of care in his education. We are not therefore to despise all such prayers, but endeavour to separate what is pious and divine from the human frailty and weakness, and be so much the more

more excited ourselves to seek after every thing that is agreeable in the gift of prayer.

The third case wherein we are in danger of mistake is, when the gift is not exercised at all. Some christians have been ready to imagine they could not pray by the Spirit, but when they exercised the gift of prayer themselves. But this is a great mistake. For tho' one person be the mouth of the rest to God, yet each that joins with him may be justly said to pray in Spirit, if the graces that are suited to the duty of prayer, and to the expressions that are then used, are found in lively exercise. And an humble christian may pray in the Spirit, in the silence of his heart, while the person who speaks to God in the name of others, hath very little or nothing of the Spirit with him.—Though the Spirit of prayer, in the common language of christians, is never applied to the exercise of the *gift* where there is no *grace*; yet it is often applied to the exercise of the *grace* of prayer, without any regard to the *gift*.

SECTION IV.

Directions to obtain and keep the SPIRIT of PRAYER.

I. **D**irection. Seek earnestly after faith in Jesus Christ; for we are told, Gal. iii. 14, that it is by faith in Christ Jesus that this Spirit is received, and that he *dwelleth* in believers, Rom. viii. 9. Let all christians therefore who would maintain and increase in the gifts of the holy Spirit, be frequent in acts of dependance on the Son of God; for the Spirit is given to him without measure, that from his fulness we may derive every gift, and grace, John iii. 34. chap. i. 16. Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace, or grace upon grace. As in the natural, so in the spiritual or mystical body, the spirits that give life and activity to the heart and tongue, and to all the members, are derived
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from the head. He that lives as our Intercessor and Advocate, to present our petitions to the throne, will send his own Spirit down to Earth, to assist us in drawing them up. I say then, regard him as your vital Head.

II. Direction. Give all diligence to acquire this gift, according to the rules concerning the matter, method, and manner of prayer, which we have laid down before; and be much in the practice of prayer, both in secret and with one another, that young habits may be improved by exercise. The Spirit of God will come and bless the labours of the mind towards the acquiring of spiritual gifts. Timothy is commanded to give attendance to reading, to meditation, &c. though he received the gifts of inspiration, 1 Tim. iv. 13. compared with ver. 14, 15, and 2 Tim. i. 6.—Much more should we do it who are not inspired.

Though prophecy was a gift of immediate inspiration, yet there were of old the schools of the prophets, in which young men were trained up in the study of divine things; that they might be the better prepared to receive, and use the Spirit of prophecy: and these were called the sons of the prophets, 2 Kings vi. 1. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 22. St. Paul laboured with his natural powers while the Spirit wrought mightily in him, Col. i. 29.

Do not imagine you are in danger of quenching the Spirit, by endeavouring to furnish yourselves with matter, or expressions of prayer, for the Spirit of God commonly works in, and by the use of means. As in the things of nature, so in the things of grace, it is a true and divine proverb; *The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat*, Prov. xiii. 4.

We are to put forth our best efforts, and then hope for divine assistance; for the Spirit of God helps together with us, συναντιλαμβάνεται, Rom. viii. 26. As if

if a man should take hold of one end of a burthen in order to raise it, and some mighty helper should make his labour effectual by raising up the other.—It was the encouragement which *David* gave his son *Solomon*, 1 Chron. xxii. 16. *Arise, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.*

III. Direction. Pray earnestly for the promised Spirit, as a Spirit of prayer.—The holy Spirit shall be given to them that ask aright, Luke xi. 13.

IV. Direction. Do not confine yourselves to any set forms whatsoever. Though the Spirit of God be present, and assist in the exercise of grace, while we use forms of prayer, yet let us have a care how we restrain any good desires, and heavenly affections, that are stirred up within us when we pray. which are not expressed in the form written down before us.

While you borrow the best aids in your devotion from those prayers that are endited by the Spirit of God in Scripture, I presume you are not required to confine yourselves entirely to such words and expressions; for if this had been the case (it may be supposed), we should have had an hint of it in holy writ.

V. Direction. Dare not indulge yourselves in a round of formality and lip-services, without pious dispositions and warm devotion in your own minds. How can we think the Spirit of God will assist, if our spirits are absent from the work.

Take notice of the frame of your minds in prayer; and since you are bid to pray always in the Spirit, Ephes. vi. 18. be not satisfied with any one prayer, where you have found no devout affections. O the dismal character and temper of those persons who pass whole years of worship, and multiply religious duties, and no Spirit in them!

VI. Di-

VI. Direction. Be thankful for every aid of the Spirit, improve it, and always beware of grieving this divine assistant by pride, &c.——Comply with his holy motions, and abide in prayer when you feel your graces lively; unless there should be some other important duty that demands your speedy attention.

Guard (I say) against spiritual pride, when at any time you feel fervent affections, and delight in prayer. The gift of prayer in flowing exercise will be in danger of puffing up the unwary christian; but let us remember, that it is with the humble God will dwell, *Isai. lvii. 15*, and to the humble he giveth more grace, *Jam. iv. 6*.

Grieve not the holy Spirit in the course of your conversation in the world, *Ephes. iv. 29*.—Grieve him not by wilful sins or by unwatchfulness.—In such a case he will hardly vouchsafe you his presence in the closet, or in the church. Obey him, therefore, when he makes a visit of conviction to your consciences, and comply with his secret dictates, when he would lead you to the most difficult and self-denying duties. *Walk in the Spirit, Gal. v. 25*. if you would *pray in the Spirit*.

Shall finish this section with a word of advice to those from whom the Spirit of prayer is in a great measure withdrawn, in order to their recovering his wonted assistance.

I. Advice. Be deeply sensible of the greatness of your loss. Recollect the times when you could pour out your whole heart before God in prayer, with a rich variety of expressions and lively graces; compare those shining hours with the dull and dark seasons of retirement of which you now complain. Go and mourn before your God, and say, “How vigorous were all the powers of my nature heretofore in worship? How warm my love? How fervent my zeal? How deep my repentance, and how joyful my thanksgivings and praises?—But now, “What
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a coldness hath seized my spirit? How dead is my heart, and how far from God and Heaven, even while my knees are bowed before him in secret? How long, O Lord, how long ere thou return again?" You may receive no small encouragement from Jerem. xxxi. 18—20.—— Let me enforce it upon you a second time, not to be satisfied with a course of duties without the life, power, and pleasure of religion.

II. Advice. Look back and remark the steps whereby the Spirit of God withdrew himself, and search after the sins that provoked him to depart.

See if you cannot find some iniquity indulged. —*David* might well fear, after his scandalous sin, that God would *take away his holy Spirit from him*, Psal. li. 11.

Ask your conscience whether you have not resisted this blessed Spirit, when he hath brought a word of conviction, reproof, or command to your soul?

Reflect whether you have not frequently absented yourself from your closet, or left it almost as soon as you came, from a sinful weariness of duty; or because your hands are generally too full of worldly business, or for want of well timing your several concerns. It is no wonder then if the Spirit absent himself from your closet, even when the world gives you leave to go thither, &c.

Consider whether you have not grown vain in gifts and attainments; and thus the holy Spirit hath been provoked to leave you to yourself, to abase your pride.

Beg earnestly of God, that he would plainly discover to you the sin that hath given him so just offence; and when you have found out your iniquity, confess it before the Lord with deep humiliation; apply to the throne for pardon; strive daily against it; earnestly implore strength from Heaven; and renew
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your engagements to be the Lord's, and to walk more watchfully before him.

III. Advice. Remember how you obtained the Spirit of prayer at first: read over all the foregoing directions. and put them in practice. Was it by faith in Jesus Christ that the Spirit was first received? Then by renewing acts of faith in Christ seek his return.—Was it by a diligent attention to duty that you found the Spirit's first assistance, then stir up all the powers of your soul to the same diligence, depending on the Spirit's secret influences, and hoping for his return.—Do not indulge a neglect of prayer upon pretence that the Spirit is departed; for you cannot expect he should revisit you without you stir up your soul to seek him.

If the frame of your mind is such, that you are not furnished with matter of prayer, take with you words from the sacred Bible, Hosea xiv. 1—4.—Plead with him his own promises to returning backsliders, Jer. iii. 22. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 31, 37, or you may turn your attention to that moving representation of the divine compassions, in the parable of the prodigal son, Luk. xv. When you have found him, entertain his first appearances with great thankfulness, and aim to abide in him in all subjection. Dare not again indulge those follies that provoked his anger and absence, lest he give you up to months and years of darkness, and that measure of the gift of prayer you had attained should be so strangely imprisoned, that you may be hardly able to pray at all.*

* Sometimes a christian (especially an aged christian) who *walks humbly with God*, may labour under a great dejection of mind, which might considerably unfit him for the exercises of devotion. Now *this* may arise merely from bodily disorder. —“The state of the blood is often such, as necessarily to suggest gloomy ideas, even in dreams, and to indispose the soul for taking pleasure in any thing: and when it is so, why should it be imagined to proceed from any peculiar divine displeasure,
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CHAPTER IV.

FAMILY PRAYERS FOR EVERY MORNING AND EVENING IN THE WEEK, &c.

Where FAMILY PRAYER has been hitherto neglected, it may be very proper to enter upon the duty with such an address as the following :

ETernal and infinite Jehovah : Thou art continually surrounded with myriads of glorious angels, who behold thy face in righteousness, who celebrate thy praises, and execute thy pleasure with rapture.—The Heavens are thine, the Earth also is thine, the Sea, and the fullness thereof: Thou hast formed the innumerable creatures that are therein, and made abundant provision for them.—We adore thee as the Author of our existence, our constant Supporter and unwearied Benefactor. Thou hast caused thy
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favors

if the soul does not find it's usual delight in religion? Or why should God be thought "to have withdrawn his holy Spirit" from us, because he suffers natural causes to produce natural effects, without breaking the connection by a miracle?—When this is the case, the help of the physician is to be sought."

"In other instance, the dejection of the mind may arise from something uncomfortable in our worldly circumstances; these may cloud as well as distract the thoughts, and render us in a great degree unfit for the services and pleasure of religion: When it is so, doubtless, the remedy is to be sought in submission to divine providence, in abstracting our affections as far as possible from the present world, in a prudent care to ease ourselves of the burthen so far as we can, by moderating unnecessary expences, and by diligent application to business, in humble dependance on the divine blessing, &c." See Dodridg. Rise and Prog. p. 242.

favours plentifully to descend on us, as a family; we have been distinguished by thy kindness and mercy.— O what reason have we to abase ourselves in thy presence! seeing we have refused to acknowledge thy goodness, which has been so long exercised towards us. The God in whose hands our life and breath is we have not glorified!—Justly therefore mightest thou have deprived us of our several comforts, and poured out thy fury on a family which hath not called on thy name.—With inward remorse and broken hearts we would fall before thee, on account of our past omissions of duty, our horrid ingratitude; and, as humble supplicants, we implore, earnestly implore thy forgiveness through the blood of Christ. And since we resolve, from henceforth, to join as a family in the daily worship of our heavenly Father, do thou, O Lord, succeed our good purposes by thy gracious assistance; do thou be pleased to have respect to our morning and evening offerings.

When thy word is read to us (at those seasons) may we be all attention to its momentous and interesting declarations.—“When we are presenting our prayers to thy throne, adoring thine infinite perfections, may we feel a reverent and joyful sense of them upon our hearts. When we confess our sins before thee, may we mourn over them, greatly abhor them, and be inspired with firm resolutions to forsake them, and to guard against every appearance of evil. Excite in our souls earnest desires after those spiritual blessings which we ask at thine hands. May we intercede for others with fervent charity. May we acknowledge thy mercies with the most lively gratitude, and devote ourselves to thee with all our hearts.”

Ever preserve us from depending on the forms of godliness, from resting in a dead faith; but may we experience the power and efficacy of divine truth, transforming us more and more into the image of thy well-beloved Son. May we be the instruments
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of quickening and encouraging each other in thy service, and likewise of stirring up many around us, to seek the Lord whilst he may be found, and to call upon him whilst he is near. And when we have done the work which thou hast given us to do, and suffered all that thou sawest meet for the trial of our faith, hope, and submission to thy will, may we be united to the bright, happy, and vast assembly of perfect worshippers above.—Hear us, accept us, and answer us, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

A PRAYER for a Family on the Morning of the Lord's Day.

O Thou inexhaustible fountain of life, light, love and joy; who hast no need of the service of the most exalted order of beings, for thy glory is essential and unchangeable.—Thou art, therefore, represented as humbling thyself, to behold the things that are in Heaven and on the Earth.—Vouchsafe at this time to behold us thine unworthy creatures from the height of that throne where mercy dwells forever!—Accept our sincere thanks that thou hast brought us again to see another of the days of the Son of man.—We adore the rich mercy of our God, that he has not left the sinful race of mankind to perish without hope. Blessed be thy name, gracious Father, for that marvellous scheme of divine and everlasting salvation by Christ Jesus. Let this, the wonder of angels, God manifested in the flesh, be the astonishment and joy of our souls!—O may we attend to day with cheerfulness upon the ordinances of thine house, and find thy presence in the assemblies of thy people! Suffer not any of us to be drowsy, idle, or
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forgetful hearers; but while thy word is read, or preached, may we take heed how we hear. May our souls be lifted up to thee with due fervency in prayer, and our lips sing thy praises with melody in our hearts. Make us all to find something in thine holy institutions suited to our spiritual state. May we on this Sabbath increase our knowledge of God, gain a victory over sin, and make some happy advances in real religion: And let us depart from thine house under the light of thy countenance, and ardently desiring the return of such opportunities.

Hear, O most merciful God, the prayer of thy people for the enlargement of that kingdom of truth and righteousness, which thou hast set up among men: May the whole world know that thou hast so loved it, as to give thy only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—And where the word of thy grace is already come, let it not be received in vain: More especially may the professors of the Gospel in our native land, and throughout the whole British empire, grow up in every christian grace and virtue, being favored with the supplies of thy good Spirit.

Pour down the choicest of thy blessings upon his majesty king George, the queen, and the royal family; may they truly adorn the high stations to which thou hast raised them, and become bright examples of all goodness. May inferior rulers be guided by thy wisdom, and influenced by thy grace, to pursue the interest and happiness of the public.—Regard the ministers of the everlasting Gospel; may they diligently study their Master's will, and faithfully deliver it to others; and we pray that thou wilt prosper their labors for the conviction of sinners, and for the building up thy church and people.—Bless our friends, and forgive our enemies.

Thou God of all compassion, be the Father of the fatherless, and the widow's Judge; bind up the broken in heart, comfort those that mourn, support the
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aged, succor the tempted, satisfy the doubting, and supply the poor with bread. †

O Thou, in whose hands are our immortal souls, and all that we have and are, to thee we would again solemnly dedicate ourselves, in thy future guidance we would put our trust, to protect us from every real evil, and at length to crown us with compleat salvation.

In the name of Jesus Christ the righteous, we offer up this our morning sacrifice of prayer and praise. *To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

A PRAYER for a Family on the Evening of the Lord's Day.

O Thou who inhabitest eternity; the Father of glory, and the God of all grace. As thy perfections are more than we can comprehend, so thy mercies are more than we can number.—To us, O Lord, to us, thou hast made known thy very wonderful works, even those things which many prophets and kings desired to see, and hear, and could not. Particularly, this day, thou hast permitted us to hear the words of life, and also to join with thy people in prayer and thanksgiving. But how mean and imperfect are our best services! How unworthy, how very unworthy of thy notice, O God! before whom angels, and arch-angels veil their faces, astonished at thy glory, acknowledging themselves as nothing, as less than nothing, when compared with thee!

We desire to confess, with shame and sorrow, how heavy and dull our spirits have been amidst the quickening ordinances of thine house. How often have our thoughts been withdrawn from the great and noble objects of religion, and wandered afar among the cares, pleasures, and vanities of this life. O most gracious God, pardon the iniquity of our holy things, and suffer not the work of the Sabbath to be entirely lost, as to any one of us. But, whilst

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we are endeavoring to recollect the weighty instructions which have been given us, may thy blessed Spirit so assist us herein; that we may retain some sense and favor of divine truths for the time to come. Yea, do thou, O Lord, cause the good seed sown to spring up, and bring forth much fruit in our future conversation.

O that we may be brought to worship God with more spirituality.---May we rejoice in Christ Jesus.---To our fellow creatures may we be just and charitable, kindly affectionate, and ready to do good, as we have ability and opportunity. Let us be examples of self-denial, patience, meekness, contentment, and heavenly mindedness; and may we come behind in no good thing, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

Wherever serious impressions have been made upon the minds of hearers, to day, by thy word, may the influences of thy holy Spirit render them effectual to their spiritual welfare and growth in grace.

Whilst we celebrate thy praises, O God, for the liberty we have of waiting upon thee in thy temple, we would sympathize with such of our christian brethren, as are destitute of this privilege. Deliver them, we beseech thee, who are persecuted for righteousness sake, deliver them from the hands of those that hate them, and grant them the pleasures of thy sanctuary.

Heal the unhappy divisions that prevail among the professors of Christianity: May the multitude of them that believe be of one heart, and of one soul, and love each other not only in word, but in deed.

O Thou great Father of the whole family in Heaven and Earth; we would with grateful hearts acknowledge thy preservation of us, the day past.

And now, let the seasonable sleep of the night-watches prepare us to meet the morning with pleasure and praise. †

Accept these our imperfect petitions for ourselves and

and others, and our thanksgivings; regard us and our services according to thine infinite compassions manifested through Christ the Savior, who hath taught us, when we pray, to say, Our Father who art in Heaven, &c.

Another PRAYER for a Family on the Lord's Day Morning.

O God of Israel, who dwellest between the cherubim; great art thou, and greatly to be praised; thy greatness is unsearchable: as thou art great so thou art good, abundant in goodness, and thy mercy endureth for ever. By thy powerful and kind hand we were at first enabled, to see the light of life; by that same hand we have been brought, through the darkness of the night past, to behold the light of the morning. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.

May we all cheerfully lay aside our worldly employments, and disengage our minds from earthly cares, that so we may wait upon thee without distraction.

We desire to keep this day to thine honor, O Almighty Father, Creator of Heaven and Earth.—Worthy art thou to receive blessing and honor, and glory and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.—Shine, great God, into our hearts, as on the first day of the creation thou didst cause the light to shine out of darkness.—May we feel the power of thy word, may it give a divine light to our souls, and may we become thy workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

We desire to keep this day holy also to the honor of Jesus Christ thine own Son and our Lord and Savior; we would observe it in memory of our deliverance by him, from sin and Hell. We would now call to mind (with peculiar thankfulness) his
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meritorious death, and triumphant resurrection, whereby he was declared to be the Son of God with power. We believe that Christ is risen, that he is risen indeed, and will be the Author of resurrection and everlasting life to all who put their trust in him, and obey the Gospel.----This Jesus may we receive in all his offices: May our minds be resigned to his doctrines as our Prophet: May we rely on his sacrifice and mediation as our Priest; and may we yield sincere, constant, universal and cheerful obedience to him as our King.

We would moreover keep this day holy, to the honor of the sacred Spirit, who on the first day of the week was sent down from the Father, by the Son, to qualify the apostles, and others, to preach the word of salvation to men of all nations: May this blessed Spirit breathe upon our dead hearts, that they may live: Let us richly enjoy his quickening, sanctifying, and comforting influences: O that the Spirit of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance, may work these amiable graces in our souls.

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May we be in the Spirit, on this thy day: Grant that we might go through the sacred services of it with profit and pleasure: Do thou glorify the house of thy glory, by affording the marks of thy presence; and we beg that prayer and Gospel ministrations may be powerful not only to our salvation, but likewise to the salvation of numbers besides.---Hear us, O our God, and graciously accept of us in Jesus Christ, our ever-living Advocate with thee our heavenly Father: *To whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

Another PRAYER for a Family on the Lord's Day Evening.

O Lord, our God! most high, most holy, most wise, and most merciful Father. Thou sendest out thy light and thy truth amongst us, to make
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the way of life and salvation plain before us; thou givest us many opportunities and advantages to quicken and further us in the knowledge of thyself, and in that way of our duty which leads to the Kingdom of Glory. We have line upon line, and precept upon precept; thy messengers come to us early and late, to open and apply thy word for the promoting our edification here, and our salvation forever. Thus, O Lord, thou hast not been wanting to us, but we have been exceedingly wanting to ourselves, and defective in the duty which we owe unto thee. It is very little to be seen in our lives, how good and kind the Lord has been to our souls; we have even loved darkness more than light, and chose to follow the evil inclinations of our own hearts, rather than to be guided by the excellent rules of thy holy word. And, now, Lord, seeing we have so little improved the invaluable talents which thou hast put into our hands; we confess that thou mightest justly take away the Gospel from us, and give it to others, that should bring forth fruits more answerable to it than we have done.—Because thou hast called, and we have refused; thou hast stretched forth thy hands and we have not regarded; thou mightest therefore leave us to our own perverseness and impenitence, till our iniquities became our ruin.

But O God, merciful and long-suffering, we humbly beseech thee that thou wilt not so enter into judgement with thy servants: Rather in mercy pardon our contempt of thy word, and our not profiting by the other means of grace which we have enjoyed. Help us for the time to come, better to use and improve such precious opportunities set before us, to the glory of thy name, and the benefit of our souls.

O make thy word instrumental and effectual to produce thy grace where it is not, and to establish and increase thy grace where it is.

Thou Almighty Maker of mankind, look down and pity a world lying in darkness: Send thy Gospel

of light and love among the Heathen nations; restore thy ancient people the Jews to thy favor, recover those parts of the Earth which lie under the delusion of Mahomet; put an end to Popish Idolatry, superstition, and tyranny over the consciences of men. Wheresoever the Gospel of Christ is preached (particularly in our own land) let it be made very successful.



Endow our sovereign king George, with all those human and divine qualities, which are necessary for such a governor.—Let wise and faithful counsellors ever stand before him.—Assist him by thy grace to pursue the things that make for his own true honor and happiness, for the welfare of the nation, and the peace of thy churches.

Bless the queen and the royal household of princes, and princesses; may they be trained up in the knowledge and practice of religion, that in their growing years they may become blessings to the world. O that holiness and piety might be defended and encouraged by all that are exalted to stations of honor and authority in the kingdom.

May the ministers of the Gospel live according to that pure doctrine which they preach to others; may they save themselves, and those who hear them.

May the sick, weak, and afflicted, the distressed, whether in body, or mind, be the objects of thy tender compassion; let all that are related to us in the bonds of nature, or that are united to us by the ties of friendship, belong to the bright and blissful society above.

After the various requests we have offered for ourselves and others, we beg leave to render humble thanks to thy Majesty, for the numerous and great benefits we have received. We praise our God for the measure of ease and health which we enjoy, and for all those comforts of life that have been continually provided for us.—Above all, we bless thee for the wonders of thy grace, in providing such a glorious

ous method of recovery for sinful mankind; blessed be God, that he has sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. O how exceedingly good and merciful hast thou been unto us; not only beyond all that we have had reason to expect from thee, but above all that we are able to express here before thee. †

We now desire to commit ourselves to thy protection for the ensuing night, spare us to the morning of the next day.—May we carry with us a sense of sabbath mercies and duties through the whole week; and may all the lawful business of it prosper in our hands. Make us more fit for another sabbath than we were for this, and prepare us for that sabbath which will never end. Attend we entreat thee to these petitions, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord; in whose words we sum up all our requests to thee, Our Father who art in Heaven, &c.

A P R A Y E R for a family on Monday morning.

O Thou God of Gods, and Lord of Lords; thine is the greatness and the glory, and the majesty; for all that is in Heaven is thine, or on the Earth is thine.

Thou hast made the day for the business of life, and hast raised us from our beds of sleep to see another morning with comfort. For this fresh instance of thy goodness, accept our unfeigned thanks.

We acknowledge before thee, we are utterly unworthy to come into thy holy presence—Our original is from the dust, and our natures unholy and unclean; our daily transgressions witness against us, and deserve destruction from the hand of thy justice:—But is there not forgiveness with thee, that sinners may be encouraged to return to God with hope and love?

Let thy mercy blot out our offences, and do thou cast all our sins behind thy back. Pity us, heavenly Father, under our spiritual blindness and ignorance
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instruct us by thy word and thy good spirit; that we might know more of our own wants and weaknesses, and that we may know thee better in the discoveries of thy grace.

Work in our minds true repentance for all our offences, and let our faith in Jesus, be such as thou wilt approve, such as may raise our hearts to God, and produce the good fruits of obedience in the whole course of our lives.

Help us to set a constant watch over all our senses, and wandering imaginations, and to suppress undue resentments, of whatsoever injuries we meet with, from our fellow creatures: O that such a serene temper may be wrought in us, as appeared in our blessed Savior. Kindle in our souls, such a pious flame of love to thyself, and charity towards men, that we might make it our delight to do good unto all, even to them who have done us evil. But may we in a special manner love those who appear to be the servants of God. Let none of the little distinctions of of party, opinion, or interest prevent our exercising a christian affection towards them.

We further pray, that thy kind providence might secure us from the snares and temptations of this vain world. O let not iniquity gain a victory over us; suffer us never to be led away by evil companions, from the paths of truth and godliness; nor let us ever be afraid or ashamed to profess ourselves worshippers of God and believers in Jesus.

May health and peace be continued to us this day, and no evil accident attend us: direct and incline our hearts to employ every hour of our time aright, and enable us to fulfil our various duties to God and man, that we may in some measure approve ourselves, in the evening, to the inquiries of our own consciences and be approved by thee, our Judge, in the last day.

When thou seest it needful to correct us, may the effect thereof be to take away our sins, and to make us partakers of thy holiness. +

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We resign ourselves up entirely to thy good pleasure, and to the conduct of thy wisdom, We desire to be thine in life and death, and in the World to come.

Great are the favors we have requested of thee, O that our pleas may come up before thy throne with acceptance.

We know indeed that we have deserved nothing at thy hands : But dost thou not delight to discover thy free and rich mercy, and to make thy grace triumphant over the unworthiness of thy creatures? hast thou not promised to hear the cries of the humble? has not Jesus Christ pleased thee in all things, and procured by his obedience unto death, all the blessings of the glorious Gospel? We beseech thee therefore by the infinite graciousness of thy nature, and by the blood of thy Son, that the lives of our souls may be precious in thy sight.

In his name we offer up our humble thanks for the mercies that we enjoy, and all that we have in prospect. It is to thee, O God, we are indebted for our lives and being, our health and ease, and the use of our senses and limbs; it is from thee we derive all the benefits of food and raiment, the daily supports of nature, together with the rich promises of grace and eternal redemption. To thee therefore we pay all honor and praise, even to that God *who is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think; unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end, Amen.*

A PRAYER for a Family on Monday Evening.

O Eternal Father! thy name alone is excellent, and thy glory none can comprehend. *One generation of men shall declare thy mighty acts unto another; they shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.*—Thy providence runs through all the earth, to behold the condition

condition, and supply the wants of thy creatures.—We adore thee, O Lord, as one who gave us our being, and as the source of all our happiness. By thy watchful providence we have been preserved from manifold evils; and by thy never-failing bounty we have been supported.—Surely goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives.---While we consider the innumerable common favors by which we are encompassed, we would not forget those which relate to our redemption from sin and misery. For that inestimable gift of thy love, Christ Jesus, and for the hope of salvation by and through him, we would magnify thee, the God of all compassion. And we desire to reflect with great thankfulness on that unparalleled love wherewith Christ hath loved us, who readily descended to our abode, that we might ascend and dwell with God, who died on the cross, that we might live for ever. Yet, O Lord, though thy care, thy kindness, and thy grace have abounded towards us in so wonderful a manner, we, even we, have neglected the God who made us, and lightly esteemed the rock of our salvation, and our desires and pursuits have been eager after the things of the world.---Numberless are the offences which we have committed against clear light and tender love.---But thou art still encouraging our hope, by assuring us thou retainest not thine anger for ever, because thou delightest in mercy.---We would therefore come as humble supplicants, entreating thy forgiveness, through the mediation of thy Son.---O that the compleat and perfect salvation, which he hath wrought out for us, may be dear and welcome to our souls.---Gracious God, who dost give to all men liberally and upbraidest not, help us to see the vileness of sin: may we consider it as an affront to thine authority, and ingratitude to the best of beings; may we view it as the lowest debasement of our natures, and as most opposite to our present and future happiness.---O cleanse thou us from all
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our sins, and fill our hearts with the love of truth and goodness.

May we know more of God and ourselves, and more of the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. As we profess to be the followers of the blessed Jesus, may we be conformed to him in the temper of our minds, and copy his example in doing good with delight, both to the souls and bodies of men. O that we may shew our love to him by obeying all his commands.---Assist us against the temptations and snares of the present state; amidst the greatest difficulties may we preserve our integrity, and by continuance in faith and holiness inherit the promises.

O thou who art the common Father of mankind, the Lover of souls; graciously hear us when we pray—that thou wouldest enlighten the whole world with the glory of the Gospel of Christ, and sow the seeds of holiness and happiness every where.

The Lord mercifully regard our intercessions in behalf of this sinful nation; may we return each one from his evil way, that iniquity may not be our ruin: and do thou bless thy people with peace.

Raise up amongst us from time to time, wise and righteous rulers, together with laborious and faithful ministers, and do thou crown their endeavors with success.—Extend thy mercy to all the afflicted.†

We humbly pray thee to bestow upon our friends and relatives, whatever thou knowest to be best for them; and be pleased to turn the hearts of our enemies.

We thank God for the blessings of every day. May we lie down this night pardoned and accepted; let no evil befall us, nor midnight outcries affright us

These our imperfect requests, we offer up unto thee, in comfortable hope of thy gracious regard, thro' Jesus Christ, in whose comprehensive words we conclude our address to thee, Our Father who art in Heaven &c.

A PRAY-

A PRAYER for a Family on Tuesday Morning.

INcomprehensible Jehovah! thou art infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness! thou art, and ever wast, and ever shalt continue blessed and glorious, above all that we are able to express or conceive. Thou dost not need the services of men or angels to make the least addition to thy glory and happiness. We cannot be profitable to God: our goodness cannot extend unto thee. Therefore 'tis not for the sake of thine own advantage, but in kindness and love to our souls, that thou art pleased to lay thy commands upon us, to wait upon thee in the duties of religion. For we stand in great and continual need of thee.

We need, O Lord, we stand in absolute need of thy forgiving mercy, the aids of thy grace, and the light of thy countenance; since without these we must be miserable.

May the desire of our souls, therefore, be to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee—Our eyes are towards thee, and all our expectation is from thee; we will wait, and call, and depend upon thee, until thou hast compassion on us according to our several necessities, and according to the riches of thy grace.

O remember not against us our former iniquities; enter not into judgment with us according to the desert of our sins: but according to thy mercy remember thou us, for thy goodness sake, O Lord. Blot out our transgressions as a cloud, and justify us freely by thy grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.—Assist us gracious God in turning away from all our iniquities, and in living and acting according to thy holy word.

And to this end, be thou pleased to enlighten our darkened minds with the beams of thy saving truth, that we may not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Reform too our stubborn wills,
incline

incline them to a cheerful compliance with all the motions of thy Spirit. Regulate our unruly passions; purify our corrupt affections; and make all the faculties of our souls, and the members of our bodies, to be instruments of thy glory, as they have been of thy dishonor. Sanctify us wholly, that we may (as we ought) sanctify thy blessed name.

O do thou be pleased to quicken us all, to hear thy voice, while it is called to-day.—May we make haste, and not delay to keep thy commandments.—Cause us frequently and affectionately to call to mind the shortness of our time, the frailty of our lives, and the uncertainty of every thing pertaining to this world.—Surely we have no continuing city here; but are strangers and sojourners, as all our fathers were: O let the consideration of this, have such a prevailing influence upon us, as to crucify the world to us, and make us more concerned for our everlasting welfare, and more careful to improve every present enjoyment to our souls eternal advantage.—May the work of thy grace go on successfully upon our hearts, and improve our conversation, till it has made us ready for the joys and glories of thy Kingdom.—Forgive the sins and relieve the miseries of thy creatures every where.

Our own unworthiness, O Lord, would make us despair of obtaining those great and good things which we have asked at thy hands: but the remembrance of thy continual bounty, and of that unutterable gift, the Son of thy love, puts life into our hopes, and encouragement into our prayers, and leaves us no reason to doubt of thy willingness to bestow upon us further blessings. With united hearts we would thank thee, in that thou hast been our Guard through the night, and preserved us from all harm.—How many are thy wonderful works, which thou hast shewn us—Glory be to thy name, that when no eye pitied, when no hand but thine could save, then was the time of thy love, then was infinite wisdom

and mercy displayed by the coming of Christ.—Direct all our steps, and succeed all our lawful labours through this day; may we enter upon our business in the fear of the Lord, and in dependence on thy care and help. † Hear our prayers and accept our praises, for the Redeemer's sake, *the first and the last, that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore.* Amen.

A PRAYER for a Family on Tuesday Evening.

O Lord God of hosts, who is there on Earth, or in Heaven like unto thee, or whose works are to be compared with thine?—*Thy faithfulness reaches unto the clouds, thy righteousness is like the great mountains, thy judgments are a great deep, thy mercy is in the Heavens.---Day and night, seed time and harvest, summer and winter, in their constant successions, declare thy providential care to be over all thy works.*

Thou, the great Lord of life, hast been our Keeper through another day, and our many temporal comforts stand secured by thy watchful eye, and guardian hand.

To thee we owe our being, all our powers, all our good things; thy mercy we thankfully acknowledge, and humbly confess our own unworthiness; for as we never deserved, so we have ill improved the constant instances of thy bounty.

Great indeed has been the ingratitude and disobedience of our hearts, and our lives have been very unfruitful.—O Lord we desire to have the deepest contrition of soul for all our past iniquities, and do earnestly implore thy heavenly aids to rectify our inward disorders, and to make us holy, as thou art holy. May we resemble thee in all goodness. Help us to shew love to each other, and to be merciful, as our Father also is merciful. May we be tender hearted and willing to forgive; as God for Christ's sake

fake is ready to forgive us, and suffer us not to be weary in well doing.

While our souls are held in life, and we find and feel, by every day's experience how good and gracious thou art, let our spirits be filled with thankfulness, our lips with praise, and may our conversation greatly adorn the Gospel.—Extend thy kind regard to all our dear relations, to our christian friends, acquaintance, and neighbors; our fervent prayer to God for them is, that they might be saved. Help us to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to weep with them that weep. May we aim to promote the happiness of all around us, as far as we are able.

Let not the ministers of Jesus Christ labor in vain, but may they be the happy and honored instruments of promoting the cause of real religion.

Leave not our country and our coast ungarded, but be thou our continual defence; crown the year with thy goodness. Inspire the king and royal house with all wisdom: adorn them with publick and private virtues, and make the people easy and happy under them.

Free the world of mankind from the yoke of Satan, and from persecuting princes and priests: establish truth, righteousness, and peace on the Earth, that God may delight to dwell here below. †

And now Lord, pardon whatever we have done amiss this day; pardon all our neglect of duty; forgive, O forgive the sins of our whole lives: is there not sufficient virtue in the blood of Christ to cleanse away our guilt? the merits of his death with all thankfulness we plead with thee.—This night may we lie down in favor with God; may we rest in peace and safety, awake refreshed, and better fitted for the services of another day: By a daily care to please thee in our tempers, words, and actions, let us be gradually more and more prepared for the vision of thy face, and for beholding the glory of the great Mediator, in and through whom, we would at
all

all times address thee; who hath directed us when we pray, to say, Our Father, &c.

A PRAYER for a Family on Wednesday Morning.

Blessed God! *Thy name is most excellent in all the Earth; who hast set thy glory above the Heavens,* and thou art worthy to be celebrated with the everlasting praises of men and angels.—As by thine almighty power the worlds were created, so by thine incomprehensible providence they are sustained.—Thy hands made and fashioned us, thou art the preserver of our lives, and from thee we receive every comfort and blessing we enjoy. Thou hast formed us for thyself, that we should shew forth thy praise, and live to thy glory, as we continually live upon thy bounty.

But O Lord, we have not brought thee that glory thou hast made us capable of, and to which thou hast in so many ways obliged us. Instead of this, how greatly have we dishonored thee, our God, in the course and conduct of our lives! time after time have we forgot the gracious giver of our good things, though thou art ever mindful of us. We have been weary in thy service, though thou hast never been weary in doing us good. Yea, we have not only neglected thy works, but we have often disobeyed thy word; and have gone on after our own foolish and hurtful lusts, which are condemned both by thy laws and our own consciences.

For these things we desire to pour out our hearts in godly sorrow, and to abase our whole persons before thee: O most merciful Father, grant us repentance and pardon for all that is past, wherein we have offended thee; whether by omitting of duty, failing in it, or acting contrary to it. In whatever respect we have transgressed, humble us duly under a sense of the same, and for thy dear Son's sake, free us from the guilt thereof.

Strength-

Strengthen us, good Lord, with might by thy Spirit in the inner-man, make us watchful against, and victorious over the corruption of our nature, the temptations of the devil, and the distractions and allurements of this sinful world. O destroy in us every vicious inclination, every evil habit, and rebellious motion, that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and against the obedience required by our Lord Jesus Christ. Implant in us divine wisdom, faith, holy fear, love, and every grace of thy blessed Spirit necessary for us.—Make our lives comfortable to ourselves, profitable to others, and to the glory of thy name. And however it goes with us, as to the concerns of time, may we always be found in the way of our duty, fearing God, and working righteousness; so that when the important hour shall arrive, in which flesh and heart, and every earthly comfort shall fail us, Jehovah may be near as the strength of our hearts, and our portion for ever.

Be pleased to remember all for whom we ought to entreat thy mercy and favor. O bring nigh unto thee, such as are yet afar off, and make manifest the favor of thy knowledge in every place.

May each one who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity: let professors in general adorn the doctrine of God their Savior in all things, and put to silence the ignorance of foolish men by well doing. †

We would now magnify thee, O Lord, who crownest each day of our lives with thy mercies. We bless thee for our last night's preservation and protection, and for the rest and refreshment once more afforded us.

Guide us to-day in all our ways, that we might please thee, and that so thou mayest bestow upon us blessings and good success: help us to see thy power, to own thy presence, to admire thy wisdom, and to love thy goodness in all thy creatures. And by
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temporal benefits may we be brought nearer to that God, from whom they proceed; and find our meditations of thee to be pleasant, yea, very delightful.

These our prayers we present unto thee, through the High-Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, *who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father : To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

A PRAYER for a Family on Wednesday Evening.

O Thou mighty one of Israel, the Lord over all the Earth, and the King of Glory! We durst not appear in the presence of thine holy and august Majesty, in our own names, or trusting in any merits in ourselves; for we are conscious of so much sin and guilt, as may make us ashamed to come before thy face, and to tremble for fear of thy judgments. But we approach thee in the name of Jesus, whom thou dost infinitely love, and who continually interceeds at thy right hand for immortal souls. Deliver us therefore, most gracious Lord, from our transgressions, seal to us, we beseech thee, a full pardon in that blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.

O that the time past of our lives wherein we have been serving our lusts and pleasures, may suffice us: let us not venture to live any longer to ourselves, nor go on to neglect the honor of that God, who made, and constantly preserves us, and sent Jesus Christ to bless us.

Grant us clean, humble, and contrite hearts; hearts that tremble at thy word and presence, and that hate all sinful ways.

Cause the thoughts of our minds to be frequently employed about thee, and the main tendency of our souls to be towards thee; may we experience satisfaction and pleasure in waiting upon thee, and in communion with thee, both in the publick and private exercises

cises of devotion: may not the most tempting things of an earthly nature draw away our hearts from the Creator to an immoderate love of the creature. Let nothing here below hinder us in the pursuit of what our faith foresees, and what thy love has prepared for, and promised to thy faithful servants in another world.

O thou almighty Sovereign, and compassionate Father, hear us when we pray to thee in behalf of all men. Send the means of grace to such as are destitute of them; and make them the favor of life to those who enjoy them. Be favorable to this our native land, to the king and to others in authority; counsel all our counsellors, teach our teachers, and order publick affairs to the glory of thy name, and the welfare of the nation. Turn away from us, O Lord, we beseech thee, the judgments which we feel or fear; continue to us the comforts for our bodies, and the advantages for our souls, which through thy patience we possess.

Sanctify thy corrections to the afflicted, support them under their several burthens, and in due time deliver them from all the pressures that are upon them. Do good to our friends and neighbors, and reward our benefactors. Preserve us from our enemies, and reconcile them both to us and to thyself.

And now we humbly entreat thee, to accept our evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, for the mercies of the day past, and for the benefits that have followed us through our whole lives. Our lives have been filled with thy mercies, and thou hast abounded towards us in a rich variety of blessings, pertaining to the present and eternal states.

O God, imprint and preserve upon our hearts, a deep and grateful sense of all thy kindness towards us; that our souls as well as our lips may bless thee, and all that is within us may praise thy holy name. We beg that we may experience the continuance of
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thy great goodness towards, and of thy tender care over us this night. Give us sleep and rest to strengthen us for our duty; and prepare us, O Lord, for our sleep in death, and for that strict account which we must give before the divine tribunal, in the great and last day.†---O that our prayers at this time may be acceptable in thy sight, through Jesus Christ, in whose words we close our requests to thee, Our Father, &c.

A PRAYER for a Family on Thursday Morning.

O God the Judge of all, whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain; though thou art high, yet hast thou respect unto the lowly, and art ready to hear the poor when he crieth unto thee, and to save the souls of the needy.---In thee we ever live, move, and are; on thee we continually depend for all the good we have, or hope to receive. Thou hast taken care of us in our moments of sleep, when we were peculiarly incapable of caring for ourselves.---Every morning affords us new occasions for gratitude and praise. But alas! how very defective have we been in the discharge of this duty.---We have not served the Lord with gladness of heart, even when his hand hath been opened widely on our behalf, yea, whilst our God has daily renewed our lives and his mercies, we have abused the gifts of thy goodness, and despised the blessings of his grace, set before us in the Gospel.---O thou offended Sovereign, thou much injured Benefactor! withdraw not thy great mercies from us, for our ingratitude to thee: but give us hearts truly penitent for all the evils committed by us, be still gracious unto us, and heal our spirits. Grant us likewise a comfortable sense of thine acceptance and kind intentions towards us in Christ Jesus, the Lover of souls.

O that the joy of the Lord might be our strength; that so we might be able successfully to oppose our sins.

fin, especially the fins to which we are most addicted, and whereof we are in greatest danger. May the joy of the Lord also make us more ready to every good work, and dispose us better for all the duties of piety, justice, charity, and sobriety.

Herein may we exercise ourselves to have always the conscience void of offence towards God, and towards man.—O help us to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, carefully redeeming the time we have lost, and conscientiously improving all those seasons and means of grace, which thou art pleased to put into our hands, for the advantage of our souls.—While we are upon earth, give us all things needful and convenient for our present pilgrimage, and sanctify to us all our enjoyments and employments, and every event that may befall us.—At length, through the multitude of thy mercies, and the merits of the Redeemer, may we be conducted in safety to that world, where we shall be for ever with the Lord. †

Gracious Father, keep us, we beseech thee, this day in thy fear and favor, and help us to live to thy glory.—If thou guide us not, we shall run into errors; if thou preserve us not, we shall fall into dangers.—O let thy good providence be our defence and security, and let thine holy Spirit conduct us in all our ways; that it may prove a season of true pleasure to ourselves, and of great usefulness to others.

Now to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

A PRAYER for a Family on Thursday Evening.

O Thou righteous and holy Sovereign of Heaven and Earth, whilst thou hatest the workers of iniquity, and hast threatened sin with death; yet for the glory of thy mercy, and in pity to thy creatures, hast thou sent thy Son, to be the Savior of the
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world,

world, and promised forgiveness through his blood, to all who confess and leave their sins, and believe in him.—We humbly own, O Lord, that we are miserable sinners. Like sheep we have gone astray, and turned every one to our own way.—Though thou art King of the whole world, and thy laws are holy, just, and good; yet we have refused subjection and obedience unto thee.

Though thou art infinite in goodness, yet have we not chosen and loved thee, as our Father, and best portion; but we have been setting our supreme affections on the perishing enjoyments of the present state. We have not with due reverence drawn nigh to thee. We have not done to others as we would be done unto: How little forgiveness hath been in our tempers and practice; we have sinned not only in our foolish passions, but presumptuously, and with deliberation; we have too often suppressed conviction, resisted light, opposed truth, and been deaf to the admonitions of conscience.—How very heavy is our load of guilt.—Thou hast commended thy love towards us, in giving Christ to die for us, and in sending thy messengers to invite us to accept the offers of pardon and eternal life; but we have made light of it, and neglected the great salvation.

O remember not against us our heinous iniquities, but deliver us, and cleanse us from our sins, and cause thy tender mercies to come nigh unto us; be pleased to shed abroad thy sanctifying influences on our souls, to form us for each duty thou requirest. Implant every grace and virtue deep in our hearts, and maintain the happy temper in the midst of those assaults from within, and from without, to which we are continually liable.

Fill our breasts, we beseech thee, with good affections towards thee our God, and towards our fellow creatures.—Remind us always of thy presence, and may we consider, that every secret sentiment of our souls is open unto thee; may we therefore guard
against

against the first risings of sin, and the first approaches to it: and that Satan may not find room for his evil suggestions, do thou fill our hearts by thine holy Spirit, and dwell in us, and walk with us; and may we go on from one degree of faith, and love, and zeal, and holiness to another, till we appear perfect before God in Zion.

Cause the chariot of the everlasting Gospel to go with triumph over the world, conquering kingdoms and hearts to the Redeemer.---May those persons who are endowed with power, exercise that power in the fear of God.---Let great grace be upon thy churches, and eminent success attend the labors of thy ministering servants. O that the Gospel of peace might be sincerely and thankfully received by multitudes, and especially by our friends and relatives; may every dispensation of thy providence respecting them work for their good.

We would now adore and praise thine almighty power, and great goodness, which are perpetually displayed in raising up, supporting, and making a bountiful provision, for the innumerable families of thy creatures around us. And O let thy name be celebrated in the highest strains, for thy amazing condescension and compassion, and for all the glorious manifestations of divine love, in the Gospel of Christ, towards both Jews and Gentiles. †

Make us truly thankful for the mercies of another day: may thy watchful eye protect us and our dwellings; and when the morning returns, may we have hearts to joy in God, through Jesus the Mediator, in whose most excellent words, we still call upon thee, as, Our Father who art in Heaven, &c.

A P R A Y E R for a family on Friday Morning.

I N V O C A T I O N .

*H*Earken to the voice of our cry, our King and our God; for unto thee will we pray.

A D O R A -

A D O R A T I O N.

Thou art *the first and the last, the only true and living God, thy glorious name is exalted above all blessing and praise.*---The whole creation is the work of thine hands, thou rulest amongst the armies of Heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the Earth, thou dost what pleaseth thee.---Thy works of nature and of grace, are full of wonder, and fought out by all those that have pleasure in them.

C O N F E S S I O N.

Whereas thou art from everlasting, and hast fixed thy throne in the highest Heavens: our being is but of yesterday, and our foundation is in the dust.

Whilst we are mean as creatures, we are also vile as sinners.---We would acknowledge and lament before thee, the pride and vanity of our minds, the violence of our passions, our want of love to God, our earthly-mindedness, our carnal security, our unthankfulness amidst abundant mercies, and our impatience in a time of affliction, our unbelief and hardness of heart, the dishonor we have brought to God, and all our miscarriages towards our fellow creatures.---These our iniquities have been committed against much light, and against great love.---We deserve, O Lord, to fall under the curse of that law which we have broken, and to be for ever banished from the blessings of that Gospel which we have so long disregarded ---But do not thou reward us according to our sins, do not punish us according to our iniquities: rather deliver us from those dreadful evils, to which we have exposed ourselves, by sinning against thee.

P L E A D I N G.

Suffer us in an humble and fervent manner to plead the cause of our souls before thee.---Is not thy loving kindness infinite? O let this loving kindness be displayed in our salvation.-----We plead, that near relation in which thou dost stand to us.-----Art
not

not thou our Creator? surely thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

We plead moreover the riches of thy grace in Christ Jesus.—Thy word declares, that thou hast sent thy Son into the world, that the world through him might be saved. We entreat thee therefore, by that great sacrifice which he once offered up on the cross, and by the intercession of this our High Priest above, to bestow upon us the benefits of the new covenant.

P E T I T I O N.

O deliver us from our spiritual enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us. Make us the partakers of a divine nature. May we love thee, the Lord our God, with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our minds, and with all our strength. May we entertain the most faithful and affectionate regards to the blessed Jesus; may he be precious unto us, as he is to them that believe.

May we receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby we may be enabled to cry, Abba, Father.—Incline us, O Lord, diligently to pursue holiness in its various branches.—May we humble ourselves under thy mighty hand; be decked with that ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in thy sight is of great price. May we be pure in heart, temperate in all things, and learn in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content.

Form us, we beseech thee, to a proper temper towards our fellow creatures; may we love our neighbors as ourselves.—As much as lieth in us, may we live peaceably with all men. May we be merciful, like the great Father of mercies. May we speak the truth from our hearts, and never judge others severely, that we may not be judged with severity.

O thou almighty and gracious God, beget in us those various qualifications of the christian temper, and render us stedfast and unmoveable, and make us
always

always to abound in thy work, as knowing that our labor in the Lord shall not be in vain.

THANKSGIVING.

We thank God for the members of our bodies, and the faculties of our souls, for the health we enjoy, and for continuing to us the proper use of the powers of our minds. Blessed be thy name, that we are preserved to this morning, that we are still witnesses of thine indulgent providence. And more especially would we praise thee, for Jesus Christ, who is exalted both as a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins. May the whole world be made acquainted with the grace of the Gospel, and let every creature under Heaven join in thanksgiving and praise to God, for that peace and reconciliation, that immortal glory and fullness of joy, to which sinners are invited by the Mediator. †

We commit ourselves to thy fatherly care this day, direct all our steps, succeed our labors and studies, and raise our hearts to thyself; that our delight may be in God, and our meditations on the most High, be frequent and sweet.—Graciously hear and accept us in the Lord, our Redeemer and Advocate.

We now ascribe, *Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

A PRAYER for a Family on Friday Evening.

O Lord God, *thou art light, and in thee is no darkness at all*; as the great fountain of light, thou hast the most clear and perfect knowledge of all things, thine holiness is unspotted, and to thee belong infinite goodness and happiness.

Angels and saints on high, *rest not day nor night, from giving glory and honor, and thanksgiving to him that sitteth upon the throne, and thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive it, and thou alone art worthy.*

We

We would likewise fall down with those glorified spirits, and pay some worship to the sovereign Majesty of Heaven: though it be impossible for us to equal theirs. With them, we would adore those excellencies of thy nature, which shall furnish holy beings with matter for everlasting entertainment and surprize.—We praise thee, for the bright displays of thine attributes in the various works of creation, and providence. And we thank thee for thy goodness to us in particular.---Yes, our grateful acknowledgments are due unto God, for giving us an existence, for teaching us more than the beasts of the Earth, and rendering us wiser than the fowls of the Air; for making us immortal beings, capable of the enjoyment of himself. Our thanksgivings shall ascend to thee, the great and good Jehovah, for keeping the springs of life in motion, for bestowing upon us daily bread, for success in worldly affairs, for preserving us going out, and coming in, waking and sleeping, and for every temporal benefit.

And O, what praises and thanksgivings become our tongues for the Gospel, that Book of life, for the wonders of redeeming grace.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly things in Christ. Surely, that abundant goodness, that rich mercy which thou hast shewn unto us, called for our flaming love, our vigorous obedience; therefore what reason have we to blush, and be confounded, when we consider, that our hearts have been cold towards thee, that thou hast seldom been in our chosen thoughts, that we have neglected thy service, and wilfully broken thine holy commands? ---Our iniquities against thee have not been few, but many, yea innumerable. Our years that are passed away, have been years of vanity and sin.---For ever adored be that divine patience, which hath so long waited upon us, which hath spared our guilty spirits to the present hour. O that a sense of our provocations,

tions, and base ingratitude, might cause our souls to shed tears of godly sorrow.----- Though we have deserved to be deprived of every blessing, and to be cast into the regions of darkness; yet do not thou thus deal with thy sinful creatures; do not make us feel the future eternal effects of thy righteous displeasure: but have mercy upon us, yea, do thou abundantly pardon. Whilst we are asking such an invaluable benefit, we would turn our eyes to the death, righteousness, and mediation of Christ; who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. We would gratefully view him, as one who is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, always living to intercede for them. We would now devote ourselves through him, to thee the Father: O regard us, notwithstanding our great unworthiness, and cause thy face to shine upon us.---Be unto us a God, and may we be thy people.

Confer upon us a knowledge to discern the things that are evil, and bless us with an exact sense of our duty. May we desire the good of others and promote their welfare as we have opportunity. In doubtful cases, may we hope the best, and speak of others with caution and tenderness. May we be of a forbearing and forgiving temper. O that we may watch over ourselves, and see to it, that we do not live in the wilful practice of iniquity, that we do not indulge ourselves in any inward lusts: but may we renounce all the vanities and evil courses of this world, and walk in all the ways of the Lord blameless.---Thou hast commanded us to make supplications for all men.---We beg, therefore, that Jesus, whom thou hast given, as a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel, might be universally owned, and cordially received. And where the Sun of righteousness is already risen, may not that highly favored people obstinately shut their eyes against his cheering beams; lest Emma-
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nuel's land should soon prove to them a land of destruction, and the valley of death.†

O thou sovereign Ruler amongst all the kingdoms of the Earth! Bless the great senate of this nation, and the king's council; that the result of their measures may be peace, liberty, and happiness to these kingdoms. May the ministers of the Gospel not seek their own, but the things of Jesus Christ.

Accept our evening vows, receive us under thy care during the recess of the night, give us the comfort of the morning light, and fit us for the morning of the resurrection-day, for the Mediator's sake, who taught his disciples to say, Our Father, &c.

A PRAYER for a Family on Saturday Morning.

O Thou God and Father of universal nature; who hast thousands of angels worshipping before thee, and ten thousand times ten thousand ministering unto thee, whose honor and happiness it is to wait the intimations of thy will, and do thy pleasure. We adore thee for the encouragements we have received to draw near unto thee. We adore thee, that thou hast revealed thyself unto us, as merciful and gracious, ready to pardon our imperfections, and lend a willing ear to our supplications.—Lord help us to call in our wandering thoughts, and do thou compose our minds to a becoming seriousness, whilst we are presenting ourselves before thee. We are come to bow down at thy footstool, for our commissions of sin, and omissions of duty, which have been exceedingly numerous and great: for we have transgressed against thy mercies, against the rebukes and warnings of thy word and providence, and the frequent admonitions of our consciences.—O may we loathe ourselves because of these our evil doings, whereby we are exposed to that doleful state, where there is nothing, but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

O God, let not the sentence of final condemnation pass upon us; but be thou merciful unto us, and cast our sins into the depth of the sea. Grant this most important and earnest request of our souls, through Jesus Christ, who is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. And through him, may we receive the promised Spirit, to subdue our iniquities, and especially the sin which most easily besets us.—Put thy law into our hearts, and write it in our minds, and may we ever retain it, as a law of love, rendering our obedience to thy precepts easy.—As thou hast graciously brought us to the beginning of another day; be with us every where, and upon all occasions. May we know the worth of time, and improve it, in attending with diligence on such duties, as thou hast appointed us.—Whilst from the inexhaustible treasures of thy goodness, thou art dispensing unto us necessities, conveniences, and a variety of temporal comforts, may our hearts adore and praise thee: And O that the fire of sacred love and gratitude may be kindled within us, and may our tongues break forth in strains of lively thanksgivings for that grace and truth, that life and immortality, which are brought to light by the Gospel.—If we are afflicted, may we not entertain hard thoughts of God, but readily say, thy will be done.—If we are in temptation, do thou make a way for us to escape.—When we are in the company of others, may it be our wish and care to get real good, and likewise to edify them. And when we are in secret, may we consider, that thou Lord seest us.—Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, may we do all to thy glory.—As we are going through this world, vouchsafe us that peace of God, which passeth all understanding. In our last moments, may we abound in hope, and passing through the gate of death, may we enter on a happy eternity. †

We

We humbly pray for all that are related to us in the bands of nature, that they may receive mercies suited to their various wants, and wisely improve them.

Hear thou from Heaven, thy dwelling place, and mercifully accept us, through our great High Priest, who is even at the right hand of God.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

A PRAYER for a Family on Saturday Evening, in scriptural language.

A D O R A T I O N.

O Thou whose name alone is Jehovah, the most High over all the Earth, with whom all things are possible; and whose eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Wonderful art thou in counsel, glorious in holiness, just and true are thy ways: A God of great kindness, slow to anger, and rich in mercy. Besides thee there is no God.---Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.---Behold thou hast made our days as an handbreadth, and our age is as nothing before thee; verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.

P E T I T I O N.

O teach us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Help us by thy good Spirit, to put off the old man with his deeds. May we lay aside all malice, hypocrisies, envies, backbitings, and filthy communication: let not any sin have dominion over us. Enable us to put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. Let the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom. **O** may we

we daily seek thee with the whole heart, and keep thy precepts diligently: may we have respect unto all thy commandments, and delight greatly in them. And whatsoever we do in word or deed, may we do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him.

T H A N K S G I V I N G.

O thou who art good to all, and whose mercy is great above the Heavens. All thy works shall praise thee, and thy saints shall bless thee.---Thou hast granted us life and favor, and thy visitation has preserved our spirits. Thou hast filled our hearts with food and gladness, and our mouth shall speak thy praise.---Behold thou hast shewn to us the exceeding riches of thy grace, in thy kindness towards us, through Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord, O our souls, who is worthy of all praise. And it is a good and pleasant thing to give thanks unto thee, and to sing praises unto thy name; to shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.

C O N F E S S I O N.

Nevertheless, we have been very far from rendering unto the Lord thanksgiving and praise, according to the benefits done unto us; yea, we have requited him evil for good.-----Hear, O Heavens, and give ear O Earth; for the Lord hath nourished and brought us up as children, and we have rebelled against him.---Father of mercies, we are no more worthy to be called thy children, but deserve to be cast off for ever.

P L E A D I N G.

Yet though we have thus forsaken the Lord, and provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, still our hope is in thee, for with the Lord there is plenteous redemption.---O say unto our souls, I, even I am he that blot-eth out your transgressions for mine own sake.

We beseech thee to make us accepted in the Beloved. And O may the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, and supply all our wants.

S E L F-

SELF-DEDICATION.

We would now give ourselves to the Lord. Truly we are thy servants, we are thy servants whom thou hast redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. We desire thee as our shield, and our exceeding great Reward. Receive us, and help us to walk worthy of God, who hath called us to his Kingdom and Glory.

INTERCESSION.

O God of the spirits of all flesh, who wouldst have all men to be saved, grant that thy way may be known upon Earth, and thy saving health among all nations.---Continue thy loving kindness unto them that know thee; and do good unto them that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts. Make wars to cease in all the world.---Think thoughts of peace towards thy British Israel. May those that rule over us be just, ruling in the fear of God; and all under authority lead a quiet, peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.---Grant that pastors may take heed to their ministry that they fulfil it.

Such as are in affliction preserve from despising the chastening of the Lord, and from fainting when rebuked of him; may affliction yeild unto them the peaceable fruit of righteousness.---Our hearts desire for our brethren, and our kinsmen according to the flesh, is, that they might do the will of God. And our prayer for our enemies is, Lord, lay not their sins to their charge.

O thou Keeper of Israel, who dost neither slumber nor sleep; make us this night to dwell in safety. As to-morrow is the Sabbath, may we keep it holy in our habitations, and also go to pay our vows in the courts of the Lord's House, and to behold the beauty of the Lord in his Temple. And when our sacred and common days are numbered and finished, may we enter into that eternal rest, which remaineth to the people of God. †

Hear us, O Lord hear us, through Jesus Christ, the righteous, who hath taught us to pray after this manner, Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and
forgive

forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever. Amen.

PETITIONS AND THANKSGIVINGS SUITED TO PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES, BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC, TO BE UNITED WITH THE PRECEDING MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS.

PETITIONS for the Afflicted, when the Symptoms of a Disorder is not very dangerous.

HEAR our prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto our cry, for one under thine afflicting hand. Look upon his [her] affliction and pain, and forgive all his [her] sins; purify his [her] soul, and let patience have its perfect work.—Heal him [her] and he [she] shall be healed. O may he [she] live to praise thee.—Prepare each of us for every important change.

PETITIONS for the Sick, if in a State of Insensibility.

O God of all power and love, we entreat thy mercy for a person who is incapable of the duty of prayer. As thou didst create the faculties of the mind, thou canst easily restore them. Be pleased to rectify what is disordered, and enable him [her] to give attention to the great concerns of his [her] immortal spirit.—O shew thyself gracious, and do all that thou knowest to be needful and good for him [her].

PETI-

PETITIONS for one who is past Hope.

Compassionate Jehovah, regard our prayers for a person who appears to be drawing nigh to the gates of death and the grave: may his [her] eyes see, and his [her] heart feel thy salvation, before he [she] leaves this world. When he [she] walks through the valley of the shadow of death, be thou with him, [her] let thy rod, and thy staff comfort him, [her] and do thou receive him [her] into an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.

PETITIONS for a diseased Child.

O Thou who comfortest them that are cast down, pity a sick child. May not its affliction be unto death: but deal graciously with us, and send the child relief from above. Yet still we would say "the will of the Lord be done."—O shouldest thou remove it hence, admit the child (we beseech thee) into thy Kingdom of peace and joy.

THANKSGIVING for a recovery from Sicknefs.

O Thou who art able to bring down to the grave, and to raise up again; all glory to thy name, in that thou hast heard the voice of our supplications, and healed the sick. May such remember the loving kindness of the Lord, and walk before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and do that which is good in thy sight.

Thus, for a Child restored to Health.

O Indulgent Father, we will extol thee on account of a child, whom thou hast helped in a season of danger, and delivered it from a threatening complaint. As this child increases in stature, may it grow in wisdom, and in favor with God and man.
Make

Make the child indeed an eminent blessing in its day and generation.

PETITIONS for any who are going a Journey, or a Voyage.

WE would commit to thy providential care, any going abroad; compass such with thy favor as with a shield, assist the person [these persons] to order every affair with discretion, do thou make the way prosperous, and cause such to return again in peace.

THANKSGIVING for a safe Return from a Journey, or Voyage.

O Thou who lookest to the ends of the Earth, and seeest under the whole Heaven! we acknowledge that protection which thou hast afforded to thy servant, [servants] all the kindness thou hast shewed to such whilst from home.—Blessed be the Lord God of Abraham, who hath not left us destitute of his mercy. Be pleased to write the characters of true thankfulness on every mind, for this fresh instance of thy goodness, and may the gratitude of our hearts be known, by our living from day to day, as becomes highly favored creatures.

PETITIONS for a Woman drawing near the Time of Difficulty, or in Travail.

AS all help cometh from the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth; we entreat thee to regard an handmaid in her present circumstances.—O may the same goodness and mercy which have given her strength to conceive, bear her up to the appointed hour, and enable her to endure the pangs of nature with patience. Save her in childbearing, and make her

her the joyful mother of a living and well formed infant. At last may she experience that best deliverance, even a deliverance from all sin and misery, be raised to a perfection of holiness, and a fullness of joy in the heavenly world.

THANKSGIVING after a safe Delivery.

G RACIOUS God we rejoice in thy kindness towards thine handmaid, who has been relieved by thee in her time of distress.---Be pleased to complete the mercy thou hast shewed her, and let a sense of the obligations under which she is laid, inspire her with love to thee; and may her future life be devoted to thy service, with joy and gladness.

We adore that divine hand, by which the infant is fearfully and wonderfully made; may it be spared to know thee betimes, and do thou always guide him [her] with thy counsel, and afterwards receive him [her] to glory.

Thus,----when the Child is dead, but the Mother preserved.

O Thou only wise God! whilst thou hast seen fit to cut off the tender branch, we praise thee for sparing thine handmaid; perfect her health and strength.---May she meekly submit to the bereaving providence, and have her heart filled with unfeigned thankfulness unto thee, for her own preservation, in the season of extremity.

ON DEATH in a Family.

O Eternal Father, thou hast caused disease and death to enter our habitation. Remove far from us every murmuring thought, and help us to say, "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Forgive,

O forgive, we entreat thee, wherein we have failed in our duty towards the deceased.--- May the mournful event lead us seriously to consider, that our life is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. May we therefore in the present day of health, use all diligence to obtain an interest in the divine favor and friendship; that when the appointed season is come, we may depart in peace, and find death to be our unspeakable gain.

PETITIONS suited to such as are in Prison for their Crimes.

INcline those that are bound in affliction and iron, because they have rebelled against the words of God to bethink themselves and repent, and make supplication unto thee; and return with all their heart, and with all their soul.

Deliver them from the bondage of corruption, and bring them into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

PETITIONS for Those who are wrongfully imprisoned.

O Lord be with them, as thou wast with Joseph in the prison; and shew them mercy. Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee. Preserve thou those that are unjustly appointed to die.

PETITIONS for condemned Malefactors.

O Pluck them as brands out of the fire; deliver them from the wrath to come; and may they give glory to God, by making confession.

Though the flesh be destroyed, let the spirit be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus.

Give them repentance unto salvation, that they may own thou art just, in all that is brought upon them.

PETI-

PETITIONS for Rain.

O Thou who delightest in mercy, are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O Lord, our God? therefore we will wait upon thee, for thou hast made all these things. Cause the rain to come down in its season, and let there be showers of blessing; make grass to grow for the cattle, and herbs and fruits for the service of men.--- suppress all our repinings under any of thy dealings, and prepare us to receive the mercies we want.

PETITIONS for fair Weather.

O God of nature, thou mightest indeed justly turn a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. But we humbly entreat thee, to spare, and pardon, and reform us.— Command the overflowing showers to cease, and punish us not with a sweeping rain, which leaveth no food.

PETITIONS in Time of Thunder, or some terrible Tempest.

Righteous, and almighty Jehovah, who looketh upon the Earth, and it trembles, and toucheth the mountains, and they smoke. Thunder and lightning, stormy winds, and other dreadful commotions of nature shew the power of thy hand, which no creature is able to resist.

We beseech thee to protect us and our habitations in this time of danger, from that awful ruin we have so justly deserved. And the Lord grant, that we may find mercy of the Lord, not only now, but likewise in that great day, wherein the Heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the Earth with all its works be burnt

burnt up.—Remember such of our fellow-creatures as are in like circumstances of danger and distress. In tender mercy cause the threatening destruction to pass over them, and may thy terrors leave deep impressions upon their minds, that they with all sincerity may adore the supreme Ruler of the world, and in thine holy fear, keep back from every presumptuous sin.

PETITIONS in Time of any public Calamity,—adapted to a Fast-Day.

Great Ruler, and Judge among the nations. Thou canst easily consume us by an immediate blow of thine hand, or arm any of thy creatures against us.—Thou art now making the land to mourn, because of our trespasses; for our sins are many, and our transgressions are highly aggravated.—How have we slighted our mercies, abused our peace and plenty! How have we neglected the glorious advantages, which by the Gospel are bestowed upon us! And when thou hast appeared in our favor, bringing salvation, how soon have we forgotten thy works! Surely thou mightest justly deprive us of every privilege, and utterly destroy us. But we rejoice to think, that we have to do with one, who doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, and whose darling attribute is mercy. We are therefore encouraged to say, hear from thy throne in the Heavens, and pardon our numerous and crying iniquities.—Pity thy people, and come and save us.—Give peace in our day; O Lord.—O that our present troubles may be sanctified to us. Whilst thy judgments are seen and felt, may we remember our evil ways, and loathe ourselves for them; and may true religion and righteousness, mutual love and charity flourish and abound amongst us; and we pray, that the Gospel of purity and peace may be continued to our native country, till time shall end.—Having
made

made humble supplication unto thee, for deliverance from our distresses; we would also thankfully acknowledge the various blessings we as yet enjoy: O may a sense of thy continued goodness to a nation laden with iniquity, powerfully affect the minds of princes and people.

THANKSGIVING for Rain.

O Thou Preserver of man and beast; who hast opened unto us the good treasures of Heaven, and sent a plentiful rain upon thine inheritance, to refresh, and make fruitful the dry and thirsty land.—May we fear, and love the Lord our God, who giveth us rain, both the former and the latter in its season.

THANKSGIVING for fair Weather.

O Lord, thou hast given to thy British Israel, a fresh testimony of thy loving kindness and compassion, by scattering the thick clouds, which seemed to threaten destruction to the fruits of the Earth. Glory be to thy name, thou great Preserver from evil, and Author of all good, that we are now favored with the cheering influences of the Sun.—Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee: and God, even our own God shall bless us.

THANKSGIVING for the Prospect of a plenteous Harvest.

O Thou whose nature is love and goodness itself; thou hast visited the Earth and watered it; thou hast made it soft with showers, and blessed the springing thereof; thy paths have dropped fatness: they drop upon the pastures, and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys are covered with corn, they shout for joy, they also sing.----O that men would praise the
the

the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

THANKSGIVING after Harvest.

THou bountiful and gracious Benefactor, who hast reserved to us the appointed weeks of harvest, and provided bread for the eater, and seed for the sower. Our meditation of thee shall be pleasant; we will be glad in the Lord, who hath thus crowned the year with his goodness. We call upon the faculties of our souls to adore and praise thee, for these thy mercies conferred upon ourselves, and others.—May none of us be guilty of such ingratitude, as to consume upon our lusts, those fruits of thy benevolence: but may we in the moderate use of them cheerfully serve thee.

THANKSGIVING for Preservation, during a violent Storm of Thunder and Lightening, or any other threatening Commotion.

THou art the God who dost wonders; wonders of power, and wonders of mercy. We will adore thy power, and sing aloud of thy mercy, for thou hast defended us and our dwellings, when danger was nigh: thou hast been our refuge, when destruction hung over our heads.—O what shall we do unto thee, for who can profit the most High?—Whilst it is impossible to answer the obligation thy kindness has laid upon us, yet, may we admire, love, bless and praise thee, to the utmost of our capacities: and may all who have enjoyed the same protection, magnify thee with thanksgiving.

THANKS-

THANKSGIVING for the Removal of a National Calamity;—suited to the 5th of November, or any Day of Public Thanksgiving.

Worthy art thou, O Lord our God, to receive all honor and glory, all thanks and praise, and love and obedience, in the courts of Heaven, and in the assemblies of thy saints here on Earth; for thou art great, and doest wonderful things, thou art God alone. Thy mercy is over all thy works, and endureth for ever.—Though many times the British nation hath provoked thee to stretch forth thy hand, and destroy it; yet, hitherto mercy hath gloried over judgment.—When the Heavens have grown black over our heads, and distress and dread were on every side, thou hast caused the Heavens again to clear up, and smile upon us.

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us. Blessed be the Lord, who did not give us as a prey to their teeth. Blessed be the Lord, who appeared for us in the time of need, and hath made us to know the joy of his salvation. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. Praise the Lord from the Heavens; praise him in the heights: let small and great, young and old, yea, every thing that hath breath, praise the Lord.—But O most gracious God, while we adore and thank thee, for treating us as the particular objects of thy goodness, and for signaling us with thy mercy, what reason have we to abase ourselves in thy presence, on the account of abounding iniquity, and the lukewarmness of professors: with what shame and contrition of soul, should we confess our personal, and our national ingratitude.—O that the divine loving-kindness, might be the means of alluring us into the pleasant paths of obedience; that so we may be continually
protected

protected by the mighty arm, and fed by the bountiful hand of the Lord Jehovah.

Of the LORD's PRAYER.

THE Lord's Prayer, is plain, short, and comprehensive. Cyprian, who died a martyr, calls it a compendium of heavenly doctrine.—This prayer, seems to have been given in our Lord's sermon on the mount, Matt. vi. as a directory, according to which, his disciples were to make other prayers.—Whereas, in Luke xi, Christ appears, in compliance with their request, to have given it as a form.—Some have urged, that *the second and fourth petition* of this prayer, could be intended only for a temporary use: but it is most evident, that such a sense may be put upon these petitions, as shall suit all christians, in all ages; for it is always our duty to pray, that Christ's kingdom may be advanced in the world, and to profess our daily dependance on God's providential care. ---*Doctor Guise* indeed, has excellently shewn, that this prayer in its original sense, was peculiarly adapted to the dispensation then present, as introductory to the *Messiah's* kingdom. But, there is not a clause in it, which will not express what ought to be our daily temper, and the breathings of our hearts before God. *Mr. Baxter* in his last sickness, said, that he found great comfort in repeating the words of the Lord's prayer; for there were all necessary petitions for soul and body contained in it.

Nevertheless, there is no reason to believe, that Christ meant to enjoin it so absolutely on all his disciples, that they should be obliged constantly to use this form, or even always to dispose their prayers in this method.—The omission of the name of Christ in this prayer, compared with John xiv. 13, 14, shews that it is not to be ordinarily used alone: and some of the petitions being expressed in the jewish stile
(familiar

(familiar to the apostles, though not to us) is an argument why it should be explained.

Shall therefore give an explanation of this prayer, according to the further discoveries made by Christ and his apostles, after the Redeemer's resurrection, and the wonderful descent of the Holy Spirit. *

The LORD's PRAYER.

OUR Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever. Amen.

The LORD's PRAYER paraphrased.

Thou *our* kind and compassionate *Father*, who art ready to attend to the petitions of thy children, from thy throne *in Heaven*.—As our first concern ought to be for thy glory, we offer it as our first request. *Hallowed be thy name*; may we think of, and speak to thee with all reverence and humility; may the whole race of mankind, yea, the whole world of creatures, who have abilities for it, pay that dutiful regard to thy divine Majesty, which thy matchless perfections so justly demand. And for this purpose, may *thy Kingdom* of grace, which thou hast been pleased long since to set up, under the government of the Messiah, thy well beloved Son, *come* more universally. May his Gospel be preached far and wide, and be heartily embraced by all nations. And as an evidence of its making very deep, and delightful impressions on the minds of men, may *thy*
Y wife,

* See DODDRIG, Lect. p. 487. WATTS on prayer, and others.

wise, holy, and gracious *will be done*, (a) *as in Heaven, so in Earth*. May the methods of thy providence be as readily submitted to, and the commands of thy word as cheerfully obeyed, as it is possible for mortals, in this imperfect state, to resemble bright spirits above; and may the Holy Ghost descend in his powerful influences, to bring about this great and good work. During our continuance here below, we humbly beg, that thou wouldest *give us day by day our daily bread*, (b) providing such a suitable supply for our present necessities, as may enable us to attend without distraction and uneasiness to the performance of our duty. If thou see'st fit to bestow upon us more than the necessities of life, may we not make an ill use of thy kindness, but consider our temporal enjoyments, as talents for which we must be accountable, and endeavor faithfully to improve them. *And* though we have in many respects been disobedient, and ungrateful children, yet, we beseech thee, to *forgive us our sins* whereby we stand chargeable, as it were, in thy book with debts, which we can never clear; O do thou grant us a full pardon, through the death and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ; *for we also* (the bowels of whose mercy cannot be compared with thine) desire to *forgive every one that is indebted to*, or who has offended and injured *us*.—Yea, such pardon may we receive from thee, our God, as
we

(a) This petition (observes Mr. *Addison*) is the most humble, as well as the most prudent, that can be offered up from the creature to his Creator; as it supposes the supreme Being wills nothing but what is for our good, and that he knows better than ourselves what is so.

(b) *Bread* is put for all sorts of needful provision.—*Give us day by day our daily bread*.—Here is a most excellent lesson, to teach us, on the one hand, moderation in our desires, and on the other, an humble dependance on divine providence for the most necessary supplies, be our possessions, or our abilities ever so great.
—DODDRIGE.

we are willing to impart to them. (c) *And to prevent us hereafter from falling into sin, so dispose of us, and guide our affairs, as to lead us not into circumstances of pressing temptation, but if any temptations do lie in the way of our duty, and we cannot avoid them, may we receive sufficient grace to resist, and overcome them. And seeing our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour, we earnestly pray, thou wouldest deliver us from the power of this evil one, that so he may never triumph in our fall and ruin; and in due time raise us to that heavenly state, where we shall be entirely free from temptation, sin, and sorrow. These things we know thou canst do for thy children, and as we are a part of thine off-spring, with humble boldness we would ask them at thine hands, in the name of the great Mediator. For thine is the Kingdom, the dominion over all nature, and the fullness of almighty power, and the glory of infinite perfection, and to thee be the praise of the various works of creation, providence and redemption, ascribed for ever. Amen.* We most sincerely wish, that it may be in all particulars, as we have requested.

ON SAYING GRACE.

GRACE before meat, or entreating God to make our food a means of nourishing our bodies, and fitting us for his service: and grace after meat, or returning thanks to God for what we have received, is a duty the Scripture

(c) It is hardly possible to imagine a more effectual expedient, to promote the forgiveness of injuries, than this of making it a part of our daily prayer, to ask such pardon from God, as we impart to our offending brother. For in this circumstance, every malicious purpose against him, would turn this petition into an imprecation, by which we should, as it were, bind down the wrath and vengeance of God upon ourselves. *Doddridge, Fam. Expos. Vol. I, p. 263.*

ture commends to us again and again. See the Old Testament, Deut. viii. 10. Joel ii. 26. In the New, see Mat. xiv. 19. Chap. xv. 36. Acts xxvii. 35, and i. Tim. iv. 4, 5. And the duty is so very reasonable, that it has been the practice not only of Jews, but likewise Heathens of every age.—Though it be admitted, that this custom is still observed in the generality of christian families, the most candid must own, tis frequently so performed, as to look like a mockery upon devotion.—“Some (as a serious writer hath remarked) mutter a few words with so low a voice, as if there was no need for the rest of the company to join with them. Others in this part of worship, affect very indecent airs, as though they had no sense of the great God to whom they speak. Not only so, but such is the state of things amongst us, that we can hardly bear with him who says grace with any degree of seriousness; and look upon it as a sign of a fanatical temper, if the person has not done, just as soon as he begins. Now, whilst we condemn those slight familiar airs; and hurrying over a sentence before any of the company are prepared to lift up a thought to God, we also disapprove of the conduct of those, who put on an unnatural solemnity, and give themselves aloose into a long prayer, and amidst a multitude of petitions, have not had one relating to the provision before them.”

The general rules of prudence, &c. would correct these disorders; and teach us, that a sentence or two suited to the occasion, delivered with an audible and proper voice, accompanied with inward reverence, and gravity of countenance, are sufficient, especially, if strangers are present: Yet in a religious family, or where all the company are of a piece (and no other circumstances forbid it) I cannot disapprove a pious man's joining any other present occurrence of Providence together with the table worship. Let me add, that every one present should exercise an inward seriousness, and manifest an outward behavior be-

becoming those who profess to join in an address to the all-seeing infinite Jehovah. Was the duty discharged in this Manner, 'twould be very likely to teach every head of a family, and his guests, that intemperance and loose discourse were shockingly inconsistent at those meals, which begin and end with devotion.

Whereas it is grown rather common to neglect this act of worship at breakfast (if it be thus with any of my readers) I would beg leave to ask (as I have done elsewhere,) since breakfast is a regular and stated meal as well as dinner, and supper, why the religious act should be omitted in the one case any more than in the other?

GRACE before Meat.

We beseech thee most merciful God, to bless us in the use of this provision, and help us to improve thy various and great favors, thro' Jesus Christ.—*Amen.*

GRACE after Meat.

What shall we render to the Lord for all his benefits?—O that the gratitude of our hearts might appear in the obedience of our lives, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Another GRACE before Meat.

Heavenly Father, may these gifts of thy bounty promote the health and strength of our bodies, and may a sense of thy goodness lead us to serve thee in truth, and with willing minds, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Another GRACE after Meat.

Let God be praised for our present enjoyments, and more especially for the hope of eternal life, thro' Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

CHAPTER V.

CONTAINING PARTICULAR DIRECTIONS
FOR THE RIGHT IMPROVEMENT OF
EACH PART OF THE DAY, SUITED TO
CHRISTIANS OF EVERY RANK, TOGE-
THER WITH PRAYERS TO BE USED IN
SECRET, &c.

THE DIRECTIONS.

FOR MORNING DEVOTIONS.

LET the morning be a witness to the obedience we pay to the following command: *Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.** or who is present with thee. A command which comes from that Jesus, who though he was the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, for our sakes became obedient to death even the death of the cross. 'Tis therefore a command enforced by the highest authority, and unparalleled love.—The word which we translate *closet*, signifies also a chamber, or any other private place; consequently none are to neglect this duty for want of so convenient an apartment as they could wish, only they should be careful to be as retired as their circumstances will admit. (a) Our

* Mat. vi. 6.

(a) If Providence has cast your lot in a family, where you have scarce ever an opportunity of being out of the sight of some body or other, yet prayer is still to be perform'd: For tho' you are not to pray with a view to be seen of men, far be it from you to neglect prayer, merely because you are unable to avoid the eyes of others. I rather insist on this point, as I fear some who dwell in small houses, or servants, &c. do frequently omit this duty for want of more privacy.

Our work in secret is reading, meditation, (*b*) and self-examination, as well as prayer. In our retirement, we may begin with taking a prospect of the day before us: "Where, and how 'tis likely to be spent; then consider what business is to be done, and in what order; what opportunities we may expect either of doing or receiving good; what temptations it is probable we may be assaulted with in any place: In what instances we have lately failed, and how we shall be safest now." To assist in the recollection, it may not be improper (if we can) to make short memorandums of these things.—After such a review, we are to lift up the heart to God, entreating him, that he would quicken us to every duty, aid us to overcome each temptation, patiently to bear the afflictions of the day, and give us success in the pursuit of our lawful concerns.

We may next proceed to read attentively some part of Scripture, especially the Psalms, or the New Testament; and those might be read in regular course; and if we can have the assistance of a Commentary, Illustration, or the like (in order to our better understanding the more difficult passages) 'tis desirable. The portion which has been read should be seriously reflected on, and we should charge it upon ourselves, not merely to be readers, but doers of the word. Jam. i. 25. For what regards self-examination beg leave to refer you to the direction for the evening.

As to prayer, that which is called free prayer, or such as is not confined to any set form of words, has
been

(*b*) Even as soon as we are awake, and while we are rising, 'tis becoming the christian to make pious reflections, "The security we have enjoyed in the hours of sleep, the provision of warm and decent apparel, the cheerful light of the Sun, or even the contrivances of art taught and furnished by the great Author of all our conveniences, the hope of returning to the dear society of our friends, the prospect of spending another day in the service of God, and the improvement of our own minds, the lively hope of a resurrection to an eternal day of happiness and glory.—All these are proper subjects for meditation."—DODDRIGE.

been generally acknowledged to be most suitable in private. Yet still those who have not ability for it, should undoubtedly use forms, and whilst they are attending to such helps, if a pertinent and affecting thought arises in their minds, it may be express'd before God; and they should attempt likewise to introduce into their prayer part of the verses just read (if adapted to their condition): By this method, in time, they may be able to address God without a form.

Whether we pray extempore, or use a form, let us see to it that the mind be deeply imprest with a sense of the divine presence. "We are to pray, as tho' we saw the eternal Jehovah standing in some visible glory before us, and attending to every word we utter." *

Respecting the voice in secret prayer, it should be rather low, to avoid ostentation; but if a christian finds that a louder voice is helpful to his attention, and to the devout affections, 'twill be best to get as far as he can out of the hearing of others.

The posture of the body should be such as gives most ease to the mind, whether kneeling, standing, or prostration; or a person may even sit during prayer, if by reason of the infirmities of age, &c. any other posture is found to discompose the spirit.

Some excellent persons have recommended the reading and singing a psalm, or hymn before prayer, as tending to disperse the dullness of the mind, to kindle an holy flame in the christian's breast, and lead him to joy in God. And as the imagination has great power over the heart, we are advised by one, to call in its aid, as a means to increase the fervor of devotion. (c)

In

* Mr. ORTON.

(c) Imagine E. G. that you had been one of those who joined with our blessed Saviour when he sung an hymn. Imagine to yourself, with what majesty he looked. Think how your heart would have been inflamed, what extasies of joy you would have then

In regard to the length of our secret devotional exercises, this is a matter not easily to be decided, since the situations of men, and even of the same person, may be different at one time, and another.

Let those who by their poverty and the necessary demands of their families have but little time to employ in secret, make the best improvement they are able of that small portion; and let others whom Providence has placed in easier circumstances be on their utmost guard, not to plunge themselves into such a multiplicity of business, as leaves them from day to day but a very few minutes for their devotions. This is to be guilty of cruelty to the superior part of our natures the soul.

When the duty is ended, we should consider whether it has been perform'd with a close attention and solemnity of spirit; for if we go thro' the work in an hasty and negligent manner, tho' we may be said, "to repeat prayers, we can scarcely be said to pray," since acceptable prayer must proceed from the heart.

Moreover let it be remembered, as a thing of the highest moment, that it is incumbent upon all to look to their after conduct, as well as to the frame of their minds when engaging in divine worship. To confine religion to seasons of worship, public, or private, and forget God the rest of the day, indulging such evil tempers, as passion, fretfulness, pride, covetousness, &c. is a fatal error indeed.

"Religion is neither public or private prayers, but prayers both public and private are parts of religion. Religion, in the full sense of the word, signifies

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fies

then felt, when singing with the Son of God. Again: Imagine to yourself, that you saw the Heavens open, and the glorious choir of cherubim and seraphim about the throne of God. Imagine that you hear the music of those angelic voices, that cease not day and night to sing the praises of him that *is*, and *was*, and *is to come*.

Help your imaginations with such passages of Scripture as these, Rev. v. 11, 12, 13. Chap. vii. 9, 10, 11, 12.—LAW.

fies a life spent in the service of God.” (d) This idea is most agreeable to the language of sacred writ.—*Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. —Be ye holy in all manner of conversation.—Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*—These divine exhortations you may perceive are not designed for any particular order of men, as ministers, but for professing christians of every rank and condition. Suffer me therefore to lay down some plain directions, relating to the christian temper and behavior in the course of the day.

Every one may be supposed to have some daily useful employ, since no man was ever sent into the world to lead an idle and useless life. Our law considers not only men, but women of family and fortune, to be of some profession; therefore during their virgin state, it calls them spinsters: and we are informed, that it is the custom of the Easterns, to instruct persons of the highest quality in some occupation. If we consult the divine Word, there we shall find sloth condemned in the severest terms; (e) and how idleness was detested even among Heathens, appears from hence, that by Solon’s law such were to suffer death.

Application to some business is advantageous and honorable; for in this way, we are most likely to avoid sin and temptation; and we become the followers of the greatest and best of examples. Yes, herein we resemble angels, who are stiled *ministering spirits*; yea we imitate our divine Lord and Master, and God himself. *My Father worketh hitherto and I work* § says Christ. ON

(d) LAW’S Serious Call, &c.

(e) 2 Thess. iii. 10, 11, 12. 1 Tim. v. 8. It is said indeed, John vi. 27, *Labor not for the meat which perisheth, &c.* But these words are to be taken comparatively, viz. That our care and labor should not be so great for temporal good things, as for spiritual and eternal enjoyments. So when we are commanded *to take no thought for food and raiment*—Matt. vi. 25, 31.—according to the original the meaning is, that we should not indulge an excessive anxiety about these matters.

§ John v. 17.

ON BUSINESS AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR
TALENTS.

HERE we intend to insist separately on what respects the laborer, the tradesman, and the gentleman.

If we are poor and enjoy health and strength, (*f*) we are not to seek a maintenance from the bounty of others, but to work with our hands in a suitable calling, with diligence and faithfulness; pursuing our labor in the manner our master directs, tho' it should cost us more pains, and lessen our profits. Endeavoring to lead a master to believe that we have complied with what he expected, when we are conscious to ourselves, that we are secretly acting a contrary part, is to make our daily business, a daily scene of iniquity. On the other hand, were we punctually to fulfil his commands, doing the same when he is absent, as when he is present, we should feel in our minds that satisfaction, which would well repay us for our increas'd bodily labor, and for giving up any unjust gains. Besides acting justly in the prosecution of our work, we should be always ready to oblige our superiors, so far as we consistently can: (*g*) And tho' we receive rough treatment, when we have given no just occasion for it, yet let us patiently

(*f*) If we are far advanced in years, and past ability for labor, or in a sick state, or would be glad to be employed but can meet with no employment—in these and the like cases 'tis sufficiently obvious that we may apply for charity.

(*g*) Supposing a master should require what is unreasonable, much more what is evidently sinful of a servant, for instance, to profane the sabbath by doing unnecessary work on that day, the servant should expostulate the case with him in a modest manner, telling him that he is quite disposed to obey his orders, so far as conscience will permit; that he hopes his master will reconsider the matter, and then perhaps it may appear to him in a different light.—If after all, the servant cannot prevail, let him not yield to any sinful compliance, but leave such service, and seek for employment elsewhere. This person has reason to apprehend, that the same divine Providence which provides for the birds of the air will interpose on his behalf.—Should the fear of man at such a time, be like to get the better of the calls of duty, let us recollect that text. Matt. x. 28.

tiently endure it, and remain silent, whilst the master's fit of passion continues, or at least return a soft answer. Thus we should act out of respect to the declared will of our divine Lord, and as desiring to please him, whose eye is always fixed upon us; then we may hope to receive the reward of grace, and he will regard even our common labors, as so many acts of religion. Ephes. vi. 5. Colos. iii. 22, 23, 24. Tit. ii. 9, 10.

If we are masters, we should consider whether the trade in which we engage be such as tends to the benefit of society. If so, whether we carry it on in a lawful manner (*h*) rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, (*i*) not defrauding the laborer of his due wages, (*k*) or his time, (*l*) keeping at a distance

(*h*) Inns or public houses are of service to the traveller, &c. but if the master or mistress encourage any to idle away their time, or to proceed to intemperance (from whence may arise a variety of atrocious evils) such houses are great nuisances, and such persons might be said (shocking thought) to live on the vices of their unhappy fellow-creatures.—I remember one in this situation, whose custom it was every evening at a certain hour, to desire the company to withdraw, and then he proceeded to family worship; and if any strangers lodged there, they were welcome to join with him, or not; as agreeable to themselves:—And he took care also, that travellers should have Bibles, or other books of devotions placed in the rooms in which they were to sleep.—Would just hint here, that for any tradesman to pinch the laborer in his wages, in order to be able to undersell others, is both injustice and oppression; and what an aggravation is it of such evil conduct, where persons already possess an abundance.

(*i*) Matt. xxii. 21. Rom. xiii. 7. As we share in the benefits of government we should most readily contribute our part towards the support of it.

(*k*) Deut. xxiv, 14, 15. We should not withhold the poor man's dues when his labor is finished and his present necessities require that he should be immediately paid. Prov. iii. 28.

(*l*) How does it pain a person of humanity, if he happens to see a poor man waiting for hours at his master's door (especially in the winter) before he is served. And on the supposition that this laborer is employed by his master in occasional work, going errands, &c. without satisfaction being made him.—where we to exchange conditions with the man, should we not think the usage hard and unjust?

tance from every species of oppression.—We should treat those who are dependent upon us with humanity and tenderness. And if laborers have given apparent or real offence, and our minds are greatly disturb'd, we should not proceed against them at such a time, as we are incapable of judging of the merits of the cause, but should reserve the decision of the affair for our calmer moments. Prov. xix. 11. Particularly, we should not in an instant charge them with dishonesty, when the suspicion rests on a slender foundation; but instead of supposing the worst, we should suppose the best, 1 Cor. xiii. 7, till on further examination, we have plain proof against the party, and then let the punishment inflicted be according to the dictates of reason and religion. Ephes. vi. 9. *Ye masters do the same things unto them; perform the duties of your station towards your servants; forbearing threatening, severe menace, reviling and reproachful language, as well as rigorous treatment; knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him,* but he will impartially judge masters and servants in that day. Was this apostolic admonition always kept in view, in our dealings with servants and other inferiors, then we should be disposed to make proper allowances for the great difficulties they have sometimes to encounter with in doing their business, and be inclined to make “the yoke of servitude as light and easy as we well can.”

To proceed, we should expect disappointments in the course of trade, and then our tempers will not be so much ruffled when they come; and that we may not injure those with whom we are concerned in business, (as a means also to promote the general ease of our minds,) we should observe exact order and regularity in our accounts, and give them a frequent inspection. 1 Cor. xiv. 40. And as accountable creatures, let us pursue trade, not merely with a view to enrich ourselves, but that we may
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be useful to mankind. If our business be followed under the influence of this christian motive, methinks 'twill induce such who have sufficient sums of money at hand, to go on in trade (in a season when labor is scarce, and when masters have no considerable profits to allure them) for the sake of the poor workmen. This would be affording a substantial proof of love to our neighbor, and might be deem'd carrying on trade to the glory of God.^(m)

Should we notwithstanding our care and diligence thro' losses, &c. fail in the world, let us do what still lies in our power to demonstrate our love of equity and justice.⁽ⁿ⁾ I add, in all our transactions with mankind, let us aim to guide our conduct by that divine rule, which is indeed suited to every purpose, station, and character. *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.* Matt. vii. 12.

We are now to speak of the employ of those who are placed by Providence in the higher ranks of life. Besides reading for the improvement of their minds, and giving a daily attention to their family concerns,
such

^(m) It has been observ'd, that it was a custom in former days, for merchants in their books of accounts, to have "laus Deo" or "praise to God" written in the beginning of every leaf, and it stood on the head of the page in large and fair letters, to put them always in mind, that in their human affairs, they should carry on a design for the glory of God.

⁽ⁿ⁾ A very honest person (thro' unforeseen misfortunes in trade) might injure others, and it may be never in his power to repair the injury, whereas had he been afterwards of ability, he would gladly have shewn to the world his honest principle by paying his former debts. Rom. xiii. 8. Instances of this kind are to be found, tho' too few.—Sometimes, we have seen a worthy pattern of justice, in the conduct of an individual, to whom have been left the effects of one, who contracted debts which he never discharged, not for want of ability, but for want of will.—This man tho' not oblig'd by human laws, yet out of regard to the law of God, and conscience, has paid these debts. The satisfaction and pleasure enjoy'd by those, who act this part, is such as no worldly gain whatever can bring with it. And little does it signify, that we flourish as to outward circumstances, if the mind be a stranger to solid peace.

such are under peculiar obligations to devote their talents to the service of religion, and to consult and pursue the good of mankind.

A gentleman who has his time and fortune at command, may be exceedingly useful, not only by encouraging book societies, for the propagation of religious knowledge among the poor, and by contributing to the support of charity-schools, &c. *but* also by condescending to make stated visits to those little seminaries, to examine into the childrens progress. The expected presence of their superiors *may* produce very benign effects.—A lady may do honor to her religious profession by imitating Dorcas in making garments for the poor, and by her readiness to perform other kind offices for them. What great blessings are persons of fortune “who have eyes quick to behold, hearts tender to feel, and hands prepared to relieve the wants of their fellow-creatures;” and more especially the necessities of the aged and sick. (*o*) And 'tis a pleasing circumstance, when such do not appear in the distribution of their charity to act from prejudice, humor, (*p*) or partiality, (*q*) but to be guided by conscience; and to be under the influence of a principle of universal benevolence. Then (we may expect) that the favors be-

(*o*) The Countess of Richmond, mother to Henry 7th, performed all her life time so many noble acts, and charitable deeds (says Stow, the historian,) that they cannot be express'd in a small volume. And her high rank was so far from inspiring her with pride and haughtiness, that she would frequently dress the wounds of poor and distressed people with her own hands.

(*p*) Some thro' caprice and fancy will give largely in one case, but do nothing in another, tho' the latter (it may be) equally deserves their assistance: Such charity is scarcely entitled to the name.

(*q*) We should beware of that contracted notion of confining charity to the parish in which we reside, or to the religious society with whom we are connected. The divine precept runs thus—*Do good unto all men.* Gal. vi. 10. If indeed two objects sought our help, and it was out of our power to assist both, then that which stands in the nearest relation to us, or the most worthy character, or where the necessity is the greatest, is to be preferred.

bestowed on the indigent, will be conferr'd in an engaging manner and with cheerfulness: where indeed this is wanting, the benefit done is much lessened in the esteem of the person who receives it, neither can it be truly acceptable to God. 2 Cor. ix. 7. If christian benevolence is deeply rooted in the hearts of the rich, 'twill also dispose them (when a matter of moment to the welfare of inferiors calls for immediate attention) willingly to be interrupted, tho' sat down to their common repast, rather than neglect the labor of love. The conduct of the Son of God in a case of this nature is truly admirable. (r)

Numerous and strong are the motives for employing our wealth, advice, power, and influence (s) on the behalf of the distress'd and necessitous.—Hereby (as already hinted) we should be the instruments of diminishing the sum of human misery, and every object of our benevolence would add to our happiness. Whereas if riches increase, and we have no heart to do good with them, they will add to our care and trouble, or if we waste them in luxury, we may be said to waste that which might be made “as eyes to the blind, as an husband to the widow, as a father to the orphan.”† The

(r) Mark iii. 20, 21. *And the multitude cometh together again; so that they could not so much as eat bread: And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him, for they said he is beside himself; or rather as the Greek word generally signifies he is greatly transported.*—We may suppose, that our Lord's attendants feared, lest the present fervency of his spirit, should injure his health, and well they might, for it appears from Luke vi. 12, &c. that our Lord had sat up the preceding night (spending it in acts of devotion) and eaten nothing this day; but was engaged in the morning, in giving a charge to his new-chosen apostles, and in the advance of the day, in preaching to a vast auditory, and working many miracles—DODDRIDGE in loc.

(s) The Hon. Mr. Boyle, who was many years a director of the East-India Company, and was peculiarly serviceable to them in procuring their charter—the only return he expected for his labor was, the engaging the company to come to some resolution in favor of the propagation of the gospel, in that part of the world. To this end, he was at the expence of printing at Oxford. in 1677, five hundred copies of the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles in the Malayan tongue.

The wealthy Christian should also consider, that the time is short and precarious in which he can have any concern in the disposal of his riches. And if he has ground to conclude, that his successor will either squander away the talent, or as the scripture expresses it, *lay it up in a napkin*, 'tis a further reason for the Christian's eagerly seizing every opportunity of usefulness.

And tho' to be extensively useful may require self-denial as to the superfluities of life, yet experience would soon tell us, that this is not so painful a thing, as is generally imagined. (t)

Permit me now to enforce those arguments with a few striking and animating passages of Scripture. Matt. xxv. 30, &c. Luke xii. 48. Acts xx 35. 1 Pet. iv. 10. 1 Tim. vi 17, 18, 19. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.* (u)

Those excellent persons who have walked in the way described, have lived belov'd, died lamented, and the memory of such, and of those in the present day, who tread in their steps, may have a most happy influence on the conduct of posterity. And tho' good works are not meritorious, yet it is undeniably

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(t) The person in affluent circumstances, who abstains from high meats and drinks, from great state and equipage, and from expensive amusements, that he may be capable of doing more good, will feel a pleasure far surpassing any of the pleasures of sense.

(u) Archbishop Sharp in his sermons, Vol. I. p. 136, explains these phrases in the following manner. Let the rich endeavor in general to do good, not only now and then, in some scanty proportion, but frequently, constantly, and abundantly; not only with their time, labor, and interest, but by distributing of their substance too; and this as freely as if it were a common stock to which all had a right,

evident, from the above passages, and other parts of holy writ, that those which proceed from an aim to please God, from faith in Christ, and pure love to our fellow creatures, shall through grace meet a reward. 2 Cor. ix. 6.

Whilst it is required of the rich to be eminent in all acts of piety and goodness, it is likewise incumbent on Christians in inferior stations, to embrace every opportunity of doing service to God and man, according to our ability. *Be ready to every good work*† is a general exhortation. It is therefore expected of the poor (if they are able) (v) to do something towards the relief of those who are more necessitous than themselves. And here I would remark for the encouragement of such (tho' it may be esteemed a kind of digression) that the laborer who diligently follows his business, in order to procure support for himself and family, and that *he may have to give to him that needeth*, Ephes. iv. 28, and is strictly honest in every part of his conduct, such a professor of religion, greatly adorns the doctrine of God his Saviour: And “the little he gives out of his little, may appear a nobler sacrifice in the eye of God, than sums vastly larger bestowed out of a plentiful abundance.” (w)---In short, let every one be concern'd to be useful according to his talent, since we are solemnly assured, that he who had but one talent was called to account for it, and condemned

† Tit. iii. 1.

(v) The poor as well as others must remember, to be just, before they are charitable. For the poor to give in charity, or to a religious use, what they owe their neighbours, instead of being acceptable to God, 'tis something like presenting him with *robbery for a burnt offering*. Isai. lxi. 8. There is a great beauty in it, when a poor person will rather suffer hardships, than run in debt; as soon as his case is known, he may expect willing assistance from the charitable.

(w) See the case of the widow who cast her two mites into the treasury. Mark xii. 41, &c.

demned to darknefs and woe for his mis-improvement thereof. Matt. xxv. 24, &c. †

AMUSEMENTS.*

THE best of men will allow, that we require some intervals for relaxation and amusement, and that these are more especially proper for the melancholy, and persons who are loaded with the cares of the world. For recreations refresh nature, give vigor to the spirits, and prepare us for the important duties of our stations. To answer these purposes, 'tis sufficiently obvious, that our diversions should be of the innocent (*a*) and useful (*b*) kind: And with regard to such diversions, we should be very cautious that they do not break in on the hours of business and devotion: Eccles. iii. 1. One frivolous amusement indulged out of season, will often carry perplexity thro' a long succession of affairs. †----“ Let us always remember, that our faculties and the advantages of the christian revelation were bestowed upon us, that we may pursue and attain some great and noble ends, and that we are to indulge ourselves in recreations no farther than as they make a part in a scheme of rational, benevolent, and pious conduct.”—And yet (painful reflection!) are there not persons that wear the christian name, who are so given to sensual pleasure, as to make amusements their business?

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† The intelligent and candid reader will excuse the length and particularity of this part of the subject, since it hath for its object, not only personal, but domestic and public happiness.

* In what remains shall follow the plan laid down by Doctor Doddridge in his “ Rise and Progress,” and give an abstract of his thoughts with some additional observations. See Chapter 19 of that work.

(*a*) How utterly inconsistent with the character of a Christian, how destructive to the health of the body and the ease of the mind, the gaming table, nightly revels, &c. are, I need not say.

(*b*) See p. 36 of a piece entitled “ The Duty and Interest of every private person, &c.” By the Author.

† Blair.

PROVIDENCES TO BE OBSERVED.

“ THAT we enjoy the comforts of health; that we
 “ are furnished with food for support and pleasure;
 “ that we have so many agreeable ways of employ-
 “ ing our time; that we have so many agreeable
 “ friends; that our business goes on prosperously;
 “ that we go out and return in safety; and that we
 “ have composure and cheerfulness of spirit, without
 “ which nothing else could be enjoy’d,----all these
 “ should be regarded as providential favors, and suit-
 “ able acknowledgments should be made to God for
 “ them. On the other hand, Providence is to be no-
 “ ticed in every disappointment, in every loss, in
 “ every pain, in every instance of unkindness from
 “ such as have professed friendship, and in the in-
 “ firmities and follies, in the temper and conduct of
 “ those around us: And we should endeavor to ar-
 “ gue ourselves into a patient submission from this
 “ consideration, that if these things are not properly
 “ the work of Providence, they are however under
 “ the divine direction.”

WATCHFULNESS AGAINST TEMPTATIONS.

It is necessary when changing our place or employ-
 ment to reflect----“ What snares attend me here?”
 And as this should be our habitual care, so we should
 (in a particular manner) guard against the snares
 which in the morning we foresaw: And when we are
 entering on those circumstances in which we ex-
 pected the assault, we should think (especially if it
 be a matter of vast importance) of that great cloud
 of witnesses who look down as it were from their
 heavenly thrones, attentively observing our beha-
 vior: To increase our courage, to awaken all our
 ardor, we should also turn our eyes to that bright-
 est and noblest object, Jesus, the Author and Fi-
 nisher of our faith, who----endured the cross, de-
 spising the shame, and is set down at the right hand
 of the throne of God; and has promised the chris-
 tian

tian conqueror, that he shall share in the honors and joys of the great Captain of salvation. Rev. iii. 21. (c)

DEPENDANCE ON DIVINE GRACE.

“As the light of reason is a kind of divine illumination it should by no means be despised: yet still our reasonings on subjects ought to be pursued in an humble sense of our dependance on the Father of lights, or else where we think ourselves wisest, we may become vain in our imaginations.” Let us therefore always call upon God, and say (for instance) when we are going to pray, “Lord fix my attention! Awaken my holy affections.”—When taking up the Bible or any other good book, “Enlighten mine understanding, warm my heart: May my good resolutions be confirm’d, and all the course of my life in a proper manner regulated.”—When addressing ourselves to any worldly business, “Lord prosper my honest endeavors!”—When going to some recreation, (d) “Lord bless my refreshments!”—When coming into company, “Lord may I do, and get good!”—When entering upon difficulties, “O give me that wisdom which is profitable to direct!”—When encountering with temptations, “Let thy strength, O gracious Redeemer, be made perfect in my weakness, &c. &c.”

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(c) The excellent Mr. PHILIP HENRY used to recommend to professors these four arguments against sin, expressed for the sake of the memory in verse, to be ready in an hour of temptation:

Is this thy kindness to thy Friend? §
It will be bitterness in the end. ||
The vows of God upon me lie; †
Should such a man as I am fly? †

§ Gen. xxxix. 9.—|| Jerem. ii. 19.—† Psalm lvi. 12.—
† Nehem. vi. 11.

(d) If we are going to pursue any Amusement on which we cannot conscientiously implore the divine blessing, what stronger reason than this can be given for abstaining from such a recreation?

THE GOVERNMENT OF OUR THOUGHTS.

SOME may imagine that if their outward conduct be fair, nothing more is requir'd of them. But the Scripture says, *keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.* Prov. iv. 23. The state of the heart determines our real character before God, and on its being holy, or unholy, depends our true happiness, or misery. As a remedy against vain and sinful thoughts, we should often review what passes in our minds, and ask ourselves whether it would not shame and confound us were our fellow-creatures to know our present thoughts. We should strive to have our minds impress'd with awful apprehensions of the presence of the Majesty of Heaven: Yes, we should consider that the flaming eye of Deity continually beholds the secrets of our hearts: and that there is a pen, (as one expresses it) always writing over our heads, and making up that great record of our thoughts, words, and actions, from which at last we are to be judged.--- That our minds might be well employed during any intervals of leisure, let us set before them some profitable subject of meditation, such as the infinite excellencies of God, the condescension and love of Christ, the worth of time, the perishing and unsatisfying nature of the world, the shortness of life, the certainty and nearness of death, judgment, and eternity; the inconceivable bliss of Heaven, and the piercing sorrows of Hell: These striking points are peculiarly proper for reflection, when our minds are getting into a very light and trifling frame.— We may too at our intervals consider, what we have observ'd as to the state of our own souls with regard to the advance or decline of religion; or we may reflect on the last sermon we heard, or the last portion of scripture we read.——“ It might likewise be very useful to select some one verse of Scripture which we met with in the morning, and treasure it up in our minds, resolving to think of that
at

at any time when we are at a loss for other matter." The course here propos'd instead of being an hindrance to us in our worldly affairs, would rather stir us up to prosecute the common labors of life with more diligence and fidelity, and lead us to act in a more honorable manner in our dealings with one another.

THE GOVERNMENT OF OUR CONVERSATION.

" WHEN in company, we should take care that nothing may escape us which can expose us, or our christian profession to censure.-----Nothing injurious to those who are absent, or to those who are present; nothing malignant, nothing insincere, nothing which may corrupt, nothing which may provoke, nothing which may mislead those about us; I say, we should beware of an extravagant way of speaking, which some are much addicted to, and hereby lead others into great mistakes. Nor should we by any means be content, that what we say is innocent, it should be our desire that it may be edifying, to ourselves, and others. In this view, we should endeavor to have some subject of profitable discourse always ready, in which we may be assisted by the hints given about furniture for thought, under the former heads.-----It may be very proper to commit to memory, the most remarkable and instructive passages we may meet with in the lives of good men, as these are most likely to draw the attention of the company. We should watch for decent opportunities of introducing useful reflections, and if a pious friend attempt to do it, we should second it immediately. When the conversation does not directly turn on religious subjects, we should aim to make it improving some other way. We should reflect on the character and capacities of our company, that we may lead them to talk of what they understand best, for their discourses on these subjects will probably be most pleasing to themselves, as well as most profitable to us. And in pauses of discourse, it
may

may not be improper to send up a devout wish to God; that he would assist us and our friends, in our endeavors to do good to each other; that all we say, and do, may be worthy the character of reasonable creatures and christians.”——As we should be ready, if we are in the company of those whose knowledge is inferior to our own, modestly to say something for their instruction; so if we are with such who excel us in knowledge, we should give them a close attention, and supposing they are rather backward in speaking, we should ask them questions on useful subjects.---If we chance to be in company with the profane, who give a loose to their tongues, we ought to express disapprobation by our looks, or by immediately withdrawing from their society, or by administering reproof with christian meekness; tho’ it must be confess’d, that as to verbal reproof, it is best to give it in private, if we have the prospect of an opportunity.

EVENING DEVOTIONS.

SHOULD advise to read in the first place a portion of Scripture with suitable reflections, &c. as recommended in the morning; then to read an hymn or psalm; after this to enter on self-examination—a duty strictly inculcated upon us in the sacred oracles. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Gal. vi. 4.----I offer you therefore the following queries to assist you in this part of secret worship.---“ Did I awake as with God this morning, and rise with a grateful sense of his goodness? “ How were the secret devotions of the morning performed? Did I offer my solemn praises and “ renew the dedication of myself to God with becoming attention and suitable affections? Did I “ lay my scheme for the business of the day wisely? “ How did I read the Scripture, or any other devotional piece? Did it do my heart good, or were “ it an amusement? How have the other stated “ devotions of the day been attended, whether in “ public, or in the family? Have I pursued the com-
mon

“ mon business of this day with diligence, in season†
 “ and in such a manner as I apprehended would be
 “ most pleasing to God? What time have I lost this
 “ day, in the morning, forenoon, or evening; and
 “ what has occasioned the loss of it? With what
 “ temper, and under what regulations have the re-
 “ creations of this day been pursued? Have I
 “ thankfully beheld the hand of God in my mer-
 “ cies, health, food, cloathing, preservation in jour-
 “ nies, success in business, kindness of friends, &c.?
 “ Have I seen it in afflictions, and particularly in
 “ little things which had a tendency to vex and
 “ disquiet me, and have I received my afflictions
 “ submissively? How have I guarded against the
 “ temptations of the day, particularly against this
 “ or that temptation which I foresaw in the morn-
 “ ing? Have I maintained an humble dependance
 “ on divine aids, when about to engage in that or
 “ the other duty? Have I governed my thoughts
 “ well? Have I governed my discourses well in such
 “ and such company? Did I say nothing passionate,
 “ mischievous, slanderous, imprudent, imperti-
 “ nent? Have I sought, found, and improved op-
 “ portunities of doing and getting good? With
 “ what attention have I read the Scripture this even-
 “ ing? How was self-examination perform’d the last
 “ night, and how have I profited this day by any re-
 “ marks on former negligences and mistakes? With
 “ what temper did I lie down, and compose myself
 “ to sleep?”——After we have seriously put to our-
 selves some such queries as these, we may close with
 prayer. In this address to the throne of grace,
 among other things “we are to entreat that God would
 “ pardon the omissions and offences of the day, to
 “ praise him for mercies temporal and spiritual, to re-
 “ commend ourselves to his protection for the ensu-
 “ ing night, and join to these proper petitions for o-
 thers,

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† See page 28, note.*

“thers whom we ought to bear on our hearts before him, and particularly for those friends with whom we have convers’d, or corresponded in the preceding day.”

The sentiments with which we should lie down upon our beds, and compose ourselves to sleep are such as these.--- We should think of the divine goodness in adding another day and the mercies of it, to the former days and mercies of life. We should take notice of the indulgence of Providence in giving us commodious habitations, and in continuing us such health of body, that we can lay ourselves down at ease upon our beds, hoping for refreshing sleep.--- Thus may our sleeping as well as our waking hours in some sense be devoted to God.

It will be likewise exceedingly proper to accustom ourselves to take a serious view of death.---“Another
“of thy mortal days (may the Christian say to himself) is now irrecoverably gone. Think O my soul
“how soon all the schemes and cares, the hopes and
“fears, the pleasures and sorrows of life will come to
“their period. Think how soon thou wilt be fix’d in
“Heaven, or Hell.---To-morrow’s sun may not enlighten mine eyes, but only shine around a breathless
“corpse: This sudden awful change has pass’d
“on one and another of my acquaintance, and who
“knows but I may be the next.---And now, O my
“soul, answer as in the sight of God: Art thou ready,
“art thou ready?---Is there no sin unforsoaken (and
“so unrepented of) to fill me with anguish in my
“departing moments, and to cause me to tremble on
“the brink of the eternal world?---Dread to remain
“under the guilt of it, and this moment renew thy
“most earnest applications to the mercy of God
“thro’ the Mediator for deliverance from it.”

But if conscience can witness that forgiveness of iniquity has been importunately sought thro’ the blood of Christ, that no sin is indulg’d, that it has been your desire and aim to be holy, and to do good to others, and that you prefer the heavenly blessedness,

ness, to all the ease, profit, pleasures, and honors of the world; then instead of starting at death, you may welcome its arrival, looking upon sudden death, as sudden glory.

CONSIDERATIONS TO ANIMATE THE CHRISTIAN
THUS TO LIVE AND ACT.

THAT we may be influenced to put in practice the preceding directions (so far as they are adapted to our various situations) let us attentively weigh the following reasons.

We see the person who is devoted to pleasure, in ardent pursuit of new gratifications; the worldly minded man unwilling to keep at the same stand, is striving hard to make an addition to his riches; and the ambitious not contented with his present condition, but aspiring after higher honors. And shall not the Christian be for *increasing in the increase of God*, for advancing daily in grace, and likeness to the Deity? 2 Pet. iii. 18. Ephes. v. 1. Phil. iii. 12, 13, 14.

'Tis an old observation, that a person cannot really love holiness (or be a true Christian) who does not desire to be more holy; and that such sincere desires will lead to suitable endeavors.

As growth or excellence in religion evidences the truth, so it secures the comforts of it: Philip. iv. 8, 9. And how strong the comfort, how enlivening the joy that springs from the testimony of a good conscience; from a sense of reconciliation with God thro' Jesus Christ the righteous; from converse with the Father of our spirits in acts of devotion; from the steadfast hope of being guarded by an omnipotent arm through the dangers of the present state; and from the prospect of complete bliss, glory, and immortality beyond the grave. 2 Cor. i. 12. Rom. v. 1. 1 Joh. i. 3. Heb. xiii. 5, 6. Rom. ii. 7, 10.

Let the christian also listen to the voice of gratitude.—Is it possible, is it possible to exert ourselves

selves too much in the service of that God from whom we deriv'd all our powers of thought and action, and every thing we possess? Rom. xii. 1. ---Were the above directions for spending each part of the day, to be from henceforth conscientiously regarded by us, should we ever say on reflection, that less diligence, less fidelity, less zeal were sufficient for the great Jehovah who offers himself to us as our portion, Rev. xxi. 7; or for that Jesus who gave himself for us, to the shame and agonizing pains of the cross: Tit. ii. 14.

When afflictions come (which are to be expected, as being needful (*e*) for christians in general) if activity, zeal and love have attended our course, then, we are likely to feel those consolations of God which are neither few, nor small. Rom. v. 3. 2 Cor. vi. 10.

Another argument (big with importance) may be taken from mens apprehensions of things on the approach of death.---“ Let conscience say if those who plunged themselves deeply into amusements, or intensely pursued earthly honors, possessions, and delights, whilst they were slothful and cold in their spiritual concerns, let conscience say, if when they were about to enter the valley of the shadow of death, whether they approved, or condemned their past conduct?----Again, let conscience say, if there was ever any one among the most strict and exemplary christians, who at this last hour, lamented that his heart and life had been too zealously devoted to God and Christ?----Or suppose you were yourself dying, and a dear friend or child stood near you, and such rules as the foregoing should come into your thoughts, would you caution that friend or child against conducting himself by these rules?---
The

(*e*) 1 Pet. i. 6. *If need be you are in heaviness.* The people of God (to use the familiar language of Mr. HENRY) have the same need of afflictions that our bodies have of physic, that our trees have of pruning, that gold and silver have of the furnace, or that a child has of chastisement.

The question perhaps may seem unnecessary, where the answer is so plain and certain."

Think, O think of that remorse and anguish which seizes the breast of a christian in his departing moments, who sees a multitude of duties he has omitted, tho' he enjoy'd opportunity upon opportunity for performing them; duties which now must be left undone for ever.---Consider on the other hand, the unutterable satisfaction, peace and comfort of the christian, who can reflect in a dying season, that he has aim'd to glorify his heavenly Father, and has with faithfulness and some degree of diligence finished the work given him to do.-----
2 Tim. iv. 7, &c.

There is one motive more of the most powerful nature, which presents itself to the christian's view, ETERNITY. 2 Cor. iv. 18. Let us remember that we live for eternity; that there is nothing but this thin veil of flesh which separates between us, and eternity; that the critical moment is just at hand, and (as I hinted above) may arrive unthought of, which will bear us on its wings to eternity; even that eternity which shall swallow up every temporal concern.

DAILY PRAYERS TO BE USED IN SECRET.

I. A MORNING PRAYER.

O THOU who art the true God, and the everlasting King; a Being of incomprehensible glory, of spotless holiness, and adorable goodness! From thy throne thou beholdest all the children of men, and their most secret actions are perfectly discerned by thine all seeing eye.---Thou knowest my down-setting and mine up-rising: Thou understandest

standest my thoughts afar off: Thou compassedst my path, and my lying down; and art acquainted with all my ways.—O what an ungrateful and rebellious part have I acted in thy sight! Have I not even renounced the God of my life, and the source of my mercies?—I have despised thy goodness, trampled upon thy authority, and abused thy patience and long-suffering (a)—For these my manifold transgressions thou mayest justly cast me away from thy favorable presence, and make me an example of thy awful displeasure for ever. But I know, O Lord, that thou desirest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live: And hast declared thyself willing to receive returning offenders, and to be reconciled to them notwithstanding all their past transgressions. To thee therefore I come through the mediation of thy dear Son. O for thy tender mercies sake, for my Saviour's sake have pity upon me, who without thine assistance am lost for ever.—Since thou hast given me thy Gospel as an outward means to save, and recover me, O do thou enable me by thy blessed Spirit thoroughly to consider, and firmly to believe it. Convince me more of my danger by sin, and of the suitableness and excellency of Christ, as a Redeemer: Be pleased to affect mine heart with such a piercing sense of my offences, as may cause floods of unfeigned grief to flow from it. O that I may utterly detest my sins, and wherein I have done iniquity, may I do so no more.—Give me, O Lord, such views of thy goodness and grace, as may fill my soul with admiration and love of thee; and inspire me with a reverence of thy greatness. Enable me to yield an unreserved obedience to thy commands, and humbly to submit
to

(a) Here a person might make a particular confession of those sins of which he has been guilty, more especially of such as lie with weight upon his conscience.—The 3d Section of Chapter i. of this Treatise, if examined with care, and the suitable passages slightly mark'd with a pen, in order to be seriously read over again, would (I presume) be helpful in the present case.

to the disposals of thy Providence. Make me like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth fruit in his season. May I be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto thy glory and praise.

I desire to bless thee for that degree of bodily health and ease which I enjoy; for any comfort in my relations; and for what is agreeable in my place of abode. I thank thee for protection thro' the past night, and for every good thing pertaining to the present state.——Above all, I would praise thee that thou hast taken compassion on a world that lay in wickedness and misery, and hast prepared salvation for those who were ready to perish. With all my soul would I bless thee, for that mine ears have heard the joyful sound, and that the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel are made known unto me. May not these wonderful and interesting discoveries be received in vain; but grant that I may be a partaker of the glory that shall hereafter be revealed.

O that the pure and undefiled religion of Jesus might spread its light to the most distant parts of the Earth. Direct our national concerns for the best. Support, and comfort the afflicted, and in due time give them deliverance. Remember all my dear relations and friends; make them heirs of the grace of life, the expectants of eternal happiness in the world to come.

And now I am about to engage in my earthly concerns, O let thy holy Spirit be with me, to keep my conscience awake, to aid me against every temptation, and to lead me in the good way; and may all temporal things be added to me, so far as they are useful. O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord hearken, and do according to thy rich grace, in *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* Amen.

II. AN EVENING PRAYER.

O THOU who art transcendently great and good, and rich in mercy to all that call upon thee in truth.—It is by the guardian hand of my God, that I am brought in safety to the close of another day: thro' all the changes of time thy Providence hath been my support, and the author of my numerous comforts. I will continually mention the loving kindness of the Lord, and the praises of my God: For thou art he who has done marvellous things, who has shewn immense love to the world of mankind. O let glory be ascribed to God in the highest Heavens, for that covenant of grace and peace, which thou hast established with the sinful children of men, in thy Son's blood.---Thanks, everlasting thanks to thy name, that unworthy as I am of thy common bounties, thou hast freely tendered to my acceptance, a share in these inestimable spiritual benefits.----For those displays of thine unspeakable kindness and love, I have made thee very unsuitable returns. I have lived a stranger to the God who formed me, and forgotten the rock of my salvation. I have made light of Jesus notwithstanding his amazing compassion, and condescension unto death. I have neglected my soul, and a blessed immortality for the sake of the vanities of this life.---Praised be thine abundant mercy, that after so many provocations, thou hast not shut thine ears against my cry. Heavenly Father come over the mountains of my guilt, and visit me with thy forgiving grace. Stretch forth thy powerful arm to my sinking soul, and deliver me from the fetters of my lusts.

Thou hast promised to assist the endeavors of thy frail creatures, promised to give thine holy Spirit to them that ask thee. I beseech thee, therefore, to quicken my faint attempts, strengthen my weak faith, and enliven my languid affections. May I indeed be effectually persuaded to part with every
sin,

sin, be it be ever so dear to me, and to comply with every duty, be it never so opposite to my inclination.---To thee, O my God, I would now make an entire surrender of myself: I entreat thee to take the full possession of my heart: O keep me close to thyself, and let nothing separate me from thy love. Help me to walk before thee, as a child of the light, in all goodness, righteousness, and truth; and let thy grace be mighty in me, to make me in every thing such as thou wouldest have me to be: And having glorified thee on Earth, may I be conducted to the ravishing joys of Heaven.

Known unto God are the circumstances, and wants of all his creatures; therefore with respect to my worldly situation, I desire to say, do thou Lord chuse mine inheritance for me.

Pardon whatever thou hast seen amiss in my temper and conduct to day: As the shadows of the evening are stretched over me, may it impress upon me the most serious thoughts of the night of death, and the vast importance of preparing for it. O raise me up in the morning fitted for the duties of another day.

The Lord bless my friends and relations, do good unto them all, according to their various cases, and necessities.

Let the words of my mouth, and meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength, and my Redeemer. Now unto God and my Father, be glory thro' Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.

III. A MORNING PRAYER.

ETERNAL and Almighty Sovereign; who art God over all, and the Father of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The brightest and most amiable glories of thy Majesty, and love are manifested to angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. Thrice happy are these thy servants, who stand be-
C c fore

fore thy throne, who see thy face without a veil, and cast down their crowns at thy feet, saying, thou art worthy to receive praise, honor, and power. Happy also in a lower degree are those on Earth, who see the milder displays of thy glory, and taste the beginnings of redeeming mercy.—That I may be able to praise and honor thee as I ought, and to seek my happiness alone in thee, who art all-sufficient, may it be the genuine language of my spirit, “As the hart panteth after the water-brooks so
 “panteth my soul after thee O God.—My soul
 “thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall
 “I come and appear before God?” To this end, deliver me from the inordinate love of earthly objects, and suffer not my mind at any time to be over-charged with the cares of the world. By the mighty operations of thy grace enable me faithfully to perform every good resolution. Inspire me with patience and constancy, that I may stand fast when attacked by temptations. Suggest to my mind those holy examples recorded in thy word, especially that of my blessed Saviour, and incline me to imitate them. May I have always near at hand some wise and faithful guide, to assist me in my spiritual necessities. And since thou art present with me where-ever I am, and dost always behold me whatsoever I am doing, O impress upon me such a strong and abiding sense of it, as may be a constant check to evil desires, and render me afraid of offending thee. And grant, I entreat thee, that a sense of my past failings, might make me more watchful for the future, against the temptations which overcame me.—That I may not again run myself unnecessarily into temptation, preserve me from sloth and idleness, and from intermeddling with matters that do not belong to me; and make me diligent and upright in the station wherein thou hast placed me.—That I may serve thee with freedom and pleasure, remove from me all unprofitable sadness

sadness and melancholy, and help me to acquire cheerfulness of spirit.---Do thou, good Lord, favor me with a lively sense and earnest expectation of yonder blissful state: O that this glorious transporting prospect may be always in my eye, that I may go on with joy and triumph over all the difficulties, and trials which oppose me. I beseech thee likewise, to stir up my slothful mind to a diligent attendance on public ordinances: May I constantly hear thy word with close attention and reverence, offer up my prayers with faith and fervency, and praise thee with melody in my heart: And may I approach thy table with all that humility and love, gratitude and resignation of soul, that becomes this solemn representation of my dear Saviour's sufferings and death. Thy grace is able to begin, and perfect thine own work in me; that grace I still earnestly implore, may that grace descend in such a manner, as to produce those charming effects. O that I may be a signal instance of thy goodness and mercy here, and an happy instrument of thy praise to eternal ages.

I desire to remember before thee all mankind: Pity thy great family below, and shew them favor. Let the Gospel of the grace of God be proclaimed from one end of the world to the other, that all nations may be blessed in Jesus, and all nations may call him blessed.—Reform the Protestant churches: Banish a spirit of party and uncharitableness, and pour down the spirit of grace and love upon them.—O that the inhabitants of Great-Britain and Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging may be preserved from those destroying evils, we have so much reason to fear; purify us from our transgressions, that glory may dwell in the Land.----Look down upon our sovereign king George, establish his throne in righteousness, and in the hearts of his people. Bless the queen, and all the royal family, adorn them with every grace and virtue.---Bless our magistrates; may they all in their stations be faithful,

ful, and serviceable to the interests of the nation.--- Especially, I beseech thee, O Father of mercies, to regard the ministers of the divine word, may they see the excellency of the truths of the Gospel, and feel their power, and be very useful to those among whom they labor.

Bestow upon my friends and relations such a measure of health and prosperity, as shall be most conducive to their everlasting welfare.

O Thou great Benefactor, who givest to all life, and breath, and all things; I adore thee as my Benefactor; I praise thee as that God, who hath fed me, and kept me all my life long unto the present day; and notwithstanding the number and weight of my sins, thou hast not appointed me to wrath, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ: yea, tho' I have refused thy kind offers, yet thou art even now earnestly inviting me by thy word, and Spirit, to receive the vast treasures of thy grace, to inherit the riches of thy glory. Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.---“ I will sing unto the Lord, as long as I live, I will sing praise unto my God, while I have my being.”

I beseech thee, to prepare me for the events of this day. Help me to keep mine heart with all diligence, knowing that from thence are the issues of life. May I walk and act so as to please thee in all things. O my God, I importunately request thee to forgive, accept, and bless me, thro' Jesus Christ, *the Head over all things to the church*, by whom I would give glory, and honor, and thanks to him that *sits on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever.* Amen.

IV. AN EVENING PRAYER.

O Thou who art the first, the greatest, the wisest, and best of Beings; glorious in all perfection. —I would bow my knees before thee, under a deep
and

and affecting sense of thine astonishing Majesty, and my own meanness; of thy liberality, and my wants; of thy justice, and my guilt; of thy purity, and my defilement.

With shame and grief I would confess, that I have been very unmindful of thee, and of thy manifold benefits; and when I have professed to draw nigh to God with my lips, too often my heart has been far from thee. I have likewise in a multiplicity of instances neglected my duty towards my neighbor. Have not duly sympathized with others in a time of trouble, or relieved their necessities with cheerfulness. And O how little regard have I paid to their highest, their eternal interests. And tho' thou hast charged me in the most strict and awful manner to forgive mine enemies, yet, I have been exceedingly backward to forgive, and love those, who have injured me. I have mis-improved my time and talents, have neglected Christ and the wonderful Grace of the Gospel.—In what a number of instances have I offended thee, acted injuriously to others, and done wrong to my own soul. “Thou O Lord knowest all my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee.”

Most merciful Father, enter not into judgment with me, lest I become as miserable, as I am sinful.—Blessed be God, that I am in a state of hope.---- Praised be the holy One of Israel, that tho' my sins be of a scarlet and crimson die, forgiveness may be obtained. 'Tis indeed a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the chief of sinners. Adored be thy name for his perfect doctrine, and for the beauties of holiness which shone forth in his example. Adored be thy name, that when he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, where he ever lives to intercede for transgressors.

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Adored be thy name, that thou refuselt none, who in the sincerity of their hearts, come unto thee by Christ; but that such is thy matchless condescension and love, thou wilt make them heirs of Heaven, and joint heirs with the Mediator.—By this Jesus who is the way, the truth, and the life, I would now approach unto God; through him I earnestly implore the full forgiveness of my countless and grievous iniquities: And that my diseased and impure nature might be rendered holy and divine. —Assist me in rooting out every evil affection, and do thou cause the several christian dispositions and graces to spring up in my mind. Particularly, do thou be pleased to bestow on thine unworthy creature such a lively faith, and vigorous hope, as may raise my soul above the present world, and teach me to despise its vanities, whensoever they would either allure, or terrify me from pursuing heavenly enjoyments. Excite in me that vehement thirst after the rivers of pleasures above, which may every day render me more indifferent to earthly things, more contented under all the events of thy providence, and more active in the discharge of the duties of life. And I beseech thee, to give me such clear apprehensions of thine essential beauties and glories, and of thy boundless loving kindness to thy creatures, as may every day improve my love to thee. O that I may love thee for what thou art in thyself considered, as well as for what thou hast been to me thy creature. Under the influence of this great and excellent principle the love of God, may I grow in grace, and be rich in good works; may I go on from weakness to strength in the habits of grace. O let me never slacken my pace, but increase my speed, as I approach the glorious immortal prize; help me to be adding daily zeal to my diligence, abasement to my humility, and fervor to my love. When by thine assistance I have perfectly conquered depraved nature within, and temptations
without,

without, and am arrived at the state of triumph, I will lay all my victories at thy feet, and with palms in my hands, and hallelujahs on my lips celebrate thy praises not only for thousands and thousands of ages, but as long as a deathless soul shall live.

O Lord, in the multitude of thy tender compassions, favor all the earth with the same spiritual privileges which I enjoy. And bless in an especial manner Great-Britain and her connections; O pour out a spirit of reformation on all ranks and degrees of men.—May all my friends and relatives be the objects of thy peculiar care and love, and may mine enemies be interested in thy pardoning grace.

I thank thee for the mercies of this day and of my past years; mercies more than I can reckon up, and infinitely more than I deserve. I would again yield myself unto the Lord as thy servant, whom thou hast bought with a price of inestimable value, even the blood of thy Son. I take thee for my Father and my God, for my glory and mine everlasting bliss. Let me lie down this night in peace with thee, and with all mankind; defend me from every disaster, refresh my body with comfortable rest, and may I arise with my mind filled with holy and delightful thoughts of thee. Grant that mine earthly concerns may be always under the direction of thy wisdom, and disposed of according to the good pleasure of thy goodness. These mine imperfect thanksgivings and petitions, I offer unto thee, in the name of thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, *who is gone into Heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him.*—*Alleluja (c) salvation, and glory, and honor and power unto the Lord my God. Amen.*

V. FOR

V. FOR THE MORNING, OR EVENING. (*d*)

O THOU infinite and eternal Spirit: The Father and Savior of the human race, and the Fountain of my being and all my enjoyments; who hast shewn a thousand times more love to me, than I have shewed to myself.—Thy mercies are new every morning, they are fresh every evening, great O Lord is thy faithfulness.—But after all the vast and most endearing obligations thou hast laid upon me, this vile and ungrateful heart of mine seems to retain some enmity against thee.

Were not my mind still infected with the malignant disease of sin, how could I think of thee without raptures of love, how could I draw nigh unto thee without transports of delight? But, now I can think of all thy goodness and love with cold and frozen affections. I can come into thy presence not only with indifference, but even with unwillingness. Good God! what an insensible soul is mine: Well may I be ashamed of myself, and confounded with the sense of my own baseness.—Fain would I shake off this clog my corrupt nature, but it hangs upon me, and sinks down my soul when it attempts to aspire towards thee. O my God have compassion upon me, be pleased to deliver me from this body of sin, ease my heavy laden spirit of its grievous burthen. And if thou hast kindled in me tho' but a spark of the divine life, suffer it not to be extinguished, but so cherish it, I beseech thee, by thy grace, as that at length it may surmount all opposition, and rise into a bright and glorious flame.—Then shall I approach thee with joy, my heart shall be firmly united to thee in a devout and ardent affection, and my prayers shall ascend as incense before thy throne; then shall every grace be in vigorous exercise, and I shall diligently and cheerfully attend

(*d*) Peculiarly suited to the case of a christian, who finds himself in a dull frame of spirit—rather averse to religious duties.

attend on every duty: O then shall I be an instrument of shewing forth the praises of mine infinite Benefactor, God, and of advancing the interest of Jesus, my divine Lord and Intercessor.

I would recommend to thy gracious regard all the kingdoms of the Earth; may the Sun of righteousness rise upon them with convincing light and glory, and may the cause of the Redeemer flourish greatly in the Land of my nativity.

Grant that those with whom I am connected by the ties of relation or friendship might walk in love, bearing each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. If any of 'em at the present instant are bowed down by reason of pain or trouble, give them, O Lord, "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise, for the spirit of heaviness." *—Open thine ears of mercy, I beseech thee, and receive these my requests, thro' the mediation of Jesus mine *High Priest, who is holy, harmless, undefiled;—and made higher than the Heavens; to whom be glory for ever and ever.* Amen.

VI. FOR THE MORNING, OR EVENING. (e)

THOU art a great God, and a great King, who shall declare thy greatness O Lord?---All possible excellence belongs to thee, and all real and substantial good flows from thee.---Thou art indeed
D d exalted

* Isai. lxi. 3. This verse signifies "a change of condition, described by a change of apparel, suited to the change of circumstances, from a calamitous, to a prosperous state.—Whereas mourners used to put ashes on their heads, now they should wear a crown[†] or diadem in token of their joy: They should likewise anoint themselves (which the Jews obtained from in a time of mourning) and change their mourning garments for such as they used to wear when they gave public thanksgiving to God."

† The Hebrew word which we render *beauty* signifies an ornament for the head.

(e) Suitable for a christian whose mind and affections are vigorously disposed towards God, and Christ, and heavenly things.

exalted infinitely beyond the conception of angels and archangels.---One day tells another, and one night proclaims unto another renewed instances of thy goodness. --It becomes thy saints continually to magnify thy goodness; but O how high should they rise in thanksgivings to thee for the bright and ravishing displays of thy grace, whereby the sinful children of men are delivered from an abyss of misery, and raised to the heights of glory and felicity. Let them say, adored be the Father of all for his immense compassions and benevolence! Adored too be Jesus the Son of the Blessed, for that love which he hath manifested to mortals, love that surpasses knowledge! Sing praises unto the Lord, sing praises unto the God of salvation, for it is good to sing praises, it is pleasant, and praise is comely. My soul shall join to magnify the Lord, my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour; for thou hast touched my soul with a vigorous sense of the exceeding riches of thy grace and mercy; I feel it like an active flame insinuating into my heart: It fires my love, cherishes my hope, wings my devotion, and raises me up into an heavenly state —Truly thou hast conquered me by thy love, and I resign myself unto thee with a most cheerful mind: I am entirely thine; I am thy servant, and in this title I glory unspeakably more than in all the honors of the world.— But tho' I am exalted by serving thee, yet thou art so infinitely blessed in the boundless perfections of thine own nature, that thou canst receive no other advantage from it except only the pleasure of seeing thy poor creature made happy by it. What then shall I render unto thee, O thou joy of my life, thou treasure of my love, thou supreme felicity of my nature. Alas! I have nothing but myself to give thee, nothing but this mean heart that pants and breaths after thee, and desires above all things to be filled with the fulness of God.---If I had ten thousand hearts to love thee, ten thousand tongues to

to praise thee, I would devote them all to thee as freely as I do myself: "For whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth I desire besides thee." In thee I am blest, and in the light of thy countenance I rejoice, far far more than in all the pleasures of this world. "My heart is ready, O Lord, my heart is ready, I will sing and give praise. Awake up my glory, awake all the powers of my soul, I myself will awake, and celebrate thy praises." --- Praised be the God of glory, praised be the God of love, praised be the Father of mercies, praised be the best Friend of souls; for thy goodness reaches to the Heavens, thy glory shines thro' the creation, and thy mercy is spread over all thy works. Who can comprehend thine infinite beauties, who can rehearse thy noble acts, who can shew forth thy praise? I do confess my expressions are too scanty, my affections too narrow, my thoughts infinitely too short to comprehend and sufficiently admire and celebrate thy glory and grace. But, O my God, thou knowest that I love thee, and blessed be thy name, I feel infinite reason so to do; O that I could love thee more, that I could love thee as much as angels and departed saints do, who yet cannot love thee as much as thou deservest, because thou deservest to be loved infinitely. O when shall I shake off this clog of sinful mortality that depresses me, and flee to those happy regions, where thy transcendent glories and excellencies shall kindle fresh ardors in my soul to all eternity. And now Lord since thou hast graciously inspired my mind with these delightful thoughts of thee, and enlarged my heart with such charming transports of love to thee, grant I beseech thee that they may not only please, but profit me: O grant that hereby my strength may be renewed to encounter my spiritual enemies, that my endeavors may be quickened, and my distrustful heart be composed into a steadfast dependance upon thee. May I keep myself pure and temperate: Make me careful

ful to render to all their dues, and to provide things honest in the sight of all men. Grant that I may be very fruitful in good works, and may I take pleasure in doing every kind office in my power to all my fellow-creatures; thus may I live as a citizen of Heaven.—Having seen the beauties of divine truth, and felt something of its transforming influence, 'tis my earnest request that my dear friends may be made to see and feel the same; O may all around me be brought to rejoice in the Lord like the righteous, and to shout for joy as the upright in heart. Yea, let all nations whom thou hast formed come and worship before thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name, and be exceeding glad in thee. These my supplications, thanksgivings and praises I humbly present unto thee, thro' the merits of Jesus Christ, *in whom it pleased the Father, that all fulness should dwell. With that great multitude—who stand before the throne, and before the lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,---I would ascribe salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. Amen and Amen.*

ESSAYS ON THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH, BAPTISM, AND THE LORD'S SUPPER, TOGETHER WITH PRAYERS ADAPTED TO THESE OCCASIONS, AND OTHERS OF A PRIVATE NATURE.

ON THE RELIGIOUS OBSERVATION OF THE LORD'S DAY.

THE Sabbath is a very ancient institution, Gen. ii. 3. which (we may suppose) was observ'd by the Patriarchs, tho' it be not expressly noticed in the history of those excellent men. (a) When

(a) " The history indeed of the Patriarchs is very short; and therefore we cannot expect any particulars of the manner and time

When God entered into a covenant with the Israelites, and chose them as his own people, this divine ordinance made one of those ten commandments, that were written by the finger of God, and laid up in the ark, on which the bright cloud, or visible glory of Jehovah rested. Psalm xcix. 1. A circumstance intimating the high importance of such a precept, and the peculiar and lasting respect due to it.

Our blessed Lord during his personal ministry, shewed his regard for the sabbath, by a regular attendance on the sacred services of the synagogue. Luke iv. 16. And after his resurrection, appears to have taught his disciples, still to keep holy one day in seven, and that it should be the first day of the week instead of the last. John xx. 19, 26. Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. (b) This appointment of Christ, is spoken of by the early christian writers; and accordingly the churches from the times of the apostles to the present; have kept the first day, as a day of public worship.

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time of their worship. But the silence of Moses on that head, will no more prove that they did not observe the weekly Sabbath, than the silence of the other sacred historians between Moses and David, who say not a word about it, will prove that it was not observed in that period, as it is certain it was. The same might be said concerning Circumcision: no instance of the use of that rite occurring from the time of Joshua to John the Baptist."—
Mr. ORTON.

(b) In the above passage, Paul orders the Corinthians to make a collection for the saints, on the first day of the week, and gives the same direction to the churches of Galatia. The collection here spoken of, answers to that which used to be made for the poor, in the Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath; and consequently leads us to conclude that the grand design of their meeting on the first day of the week was for religious worship.—Since the first day of the week is so often specified by name in the New Test. and we are also informed of religious meeting being held on that day, whereas there is no such mention made of the second, third, fourth, fifth, &c. this is a strong intimation that there was some peculiar holiness belonging to it, that 'twas ordain'd

That one day in the week (under the Gospel as well as under the law) should be set apart for assembling together on a religious account, seems to have been foretold by the Prophets; particularly by Isaiah, who discoursing of the latter day, or the times of the Messiah, says, "And it shall come to pass that from one Sabbath to another all flesh shall come to worship before me."†

Indeed the Sabbath is an institution agreeable to the general practice of the Pagan nations (c) an institution that speaks for itself. To adopt the words of a pious writer "Were the observation of the Lord's day dropt but for one year, what an inundation of ignorance, superstition, and profaneness would break in upon us, and bear down every thing that is sacred and valuable."—The Sabbath keeps piety alive, and spreads the knowledge of religion.

We proceed to point out the duties of the Sabbath both private and public:

Rising as early on this as on common days, we should betake ourselves to religious retirement. Here we are to call to remembrance the reason given for the appointment of the patriarchal and Jewish Sabbath, and the design of the Christian Sabbath.—

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dain'd to be the Christian Sabbath.—It may not be altogether improper further to remark, that Providence has distinguished this day with no small honors. As it was on the first day of the week that Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. On the first day of the week the holy Spirit descended from Heaven in his wonderful miraculous gifts. And on the first day of the week about three thousand souls were added to the church, who continued stedfastly in the religion they had embraced, and sacrificed all their worldly interest to it. 'Twas natural therefore for the Christian Fathers, when they mention the Lord's day, to stile it, "The chief of our days, the Queen and Empress of our days."

† Chap. lxvi. 23.

(c) The ancient Heathens observed one day in the week as sacred, in which they publickly worshipped their Gods.—The Mahometans keep the sixth day of the week, and the Indians the fourth.

That the former was intended to put man in mind of the creation of the world by the living and true God, and the latter to commemorate the glorious resurrection of Christ. Therefore amongst other subjects of meditation, in our secret devotions, we should not forget to contemplate the attributes of God, his power, wisdom, and goodness, as they are wonderfully displayed in the formation of the creature, and in constantly upholding and making suitable provision for the various works of his hands. *(d)* We ought too as christians, to meditate on the astonishing, sublime, and delightful scheme of our redemption, by Jesus Christ; that act of pure, rich, and unutterable grace. *(e)*---Thus to engage the mind, is so far to answer the end both of the old and new institution.---In our private prayers, we are to be sure and put up petitions for the minister on whom we are to attend, in the course of the day, otherwise we can scarcely expect a blessing to accompany the word preached. Says the excellent Mrs. Bury in her Diary "I have heard a sermon to day, but I forgot to pray for the minister, and I sped accordingly."

If you are the Head of a family (having joined together in family prayer) go with them in proper season to the place of public worship. When you are approaching the temple of the Lord, guard against such thoughts and conversation as would discompose your minds; and to inspire you with solemnity of spirit, reflect on the following Scriptures Prov. iv. 23. John iv. 24. Considering you now as in the House of God, shall lay before you some plain directions, for hearing the word, &c. to edification. As this is a matter of infinite moment, you will excuse my being rather particular. HAVE

(d) To assist our meditations we may turn to the following Psalms xix, xcii, xcv, cxlv.

(e) To aid our meditations here, we may find such passages as these useful Luke ii. 8—16. John iii. 16. Ephes. iii. 17, 18, 19. Tit. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

HEAR THE WORD SIRs WITH A FIXED, AND SERIOUS ATTENTION.-----To compose ourselves to sleep in a place of worship, (*f*) or every now and then to turn the eye from seat to seat, and from object to object, or whilst the eye is fixed on the preacher, and we appear to others to be attentive, yet to employ our thoughts about some worldly scheme,---this is the way effectually to prevent our profiting by the means of grace; 'tis acting as if we apprehended the truths of the Gospel were of no concern to us; and 'tis casting great contempt upon the divine Majesty. Yes, when a person is addressing us, not in his own name, but in the Name of God, about affairs relating to the soul and eternity, to be careless and negligent at such a time, is grossly to affront the infinite Jehovah. Luke x. 16. I might have remark'd, that a close attention is necessary to prevent mistakes, as to the meaning of what is spoken. Some hearers for want of this, have been apt to take one thing for another, and to put such constructions upon the minister's words, as he never intended. Be persuaded then to apply your minds closely to what is delivered, that you may understand. "Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand" * says our Lord.

Be serious in your attention. By seriousness, we mean not only a gravity of countenance, in opposition to lightness and laughter, (*g*) but also a deep reverence

(*f*) Where this is owing to a bodily infirmity, and it is the person's grief, in token of which he uses every mean to prevent it, and yet after all is overcome, such a one is more deserving of pity than reproof

* Mark vii. 14.

(*g*) If any of us, who sustain the ministerial character, should adopt a mode of preaching that tends to produce this light behavior, the blame would fall upon such. Doubtless we are to take the Apostles and more especially our divine Master for a pattern, as public speakers. Now in his discourses to the people, tho' his comparisons were familiar, yet not low and gross; and were admirably adapted to illustrate the subject he

reverence of spirit.----Does not seriousness become the man who is hearing a description of the august attributes of God? Or of the dangerous condition we are in by sin? Or of the all-important offices of Christ? Or of the unspeakable glories and boundless joys of Heaven? Or of the bitter agonies of the second death?---*He that hath ears to hear, with all seriousness, let him hear.* Mat. xi. 15.

IF WE HAVE ANY REGARD TO OUR OWN SPIRITUAL ADVANTAGE, WE SHOULD NEVER ATTEND ON DIVINE ORDINANCES WITH PREJUDICE, AND A DESIGN TO CARP AND FIND FAULT; BUT HEAR WITH CANDOR, HUMILITY, MEEKNESS, AND SELF-APPLICATION; AND BRING WHAT WE HEAR TO GOD'S WORD, AS THE GRAND UNERRING STANDARD.-----Possible persons may be prejudiced against a minister on account of a party name, which perhaps has been very unjustly given him. Or because they have conceived an unfavorable idea of the place from whence he comes. They are ready to say as Nathaniel did concerning the divine Savior, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Let such remember Philip's reply, to that sincere, but mistaken Israelite "Come and see."† And let them when under the
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was upon. And is there not moreover a becoming gravity running thro' the whole, so that as his similes were adapted to strike the attention, they were likewise calculated to beget in the minds of hearers a reverential awe. Therefore, how unlike is it to our divine Pattern, in popular addresses, to use mean and unseemly comparisons, pitiful puns, and idle stories. And tho' we should apprehend good effects arising from hence, (by the way we are to remember, that we may often mistake appearances for realities) this will not vindicate us, in doing evil, that good may come of it.—'Tis too obvious, that introducing into our discourses things that tickle the fancy, serves to give hearers a distaste for those parts of a sermon, that are design'd to inform the understanding, and convey substantial knowledge to the soul; and how great an evil this is, and whither it tends, I need not say. Let us then Sirs take heed, that we do not leave room for serious and intelligent hearers, to charge us with *ludere cum sacris*.

† John i. 45, 46.

ministry of the word, consider rather what is spoken, than who it is that speaks.

We should be far from indulging a carping turn of mind ;---charging ministers (for instance) with not preaching Christ, because they do not introduce certain doctrines of the Gospel into every discourse. A little reflection will convince us, that different texts require, that sometimes one truth, and sometimes another, is to be explain'd, and enforced.---Neither ought we rashly to impute to them the denial of the influence of divine grace, when (it may be) they are only guarding against the abuse of it. Nor should we censure those ministers as legal preachers, who in their sermons, largely insist on the several branches of the christian temper, and the necessity of bringing forth the fruits of holiness in our lives. For tho' it be at once admitted, that good works cannot justify us before God, and render us deserving of the blessings of salvation, yet what can appear more evident from Scripture than this, that faith without works is of no avail. James ii. 17.---Hearers who dislike such subjects, would without doubt have disliked the preaching of St. Paul to Felix: nay would have disliked the preaching of Christ himself. See our Lord's Sermon on the mount, Matt. v. &c. Beware in an especial manner of going from place to place, to hear the word only with an intention to lay hold on some expression, in order to turn it to the disadvantage of the speaker. (*h*) This is to imitate the disciples of the Pharisees, in their conduct towards Jesus. Mark xii. 13. And is it not hearing to condemnation? Is it not taking the ready way for the word preached, to be a favor of death unto death?

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(*h*) Was indeed a serious and judicious person to hear any thing of an extravagant nature, and dangerous tendency delivered, he may certainly take such notice of it afterwards, as is necessary to prevent those of weaker judgments from being misled by it.

On the contrary, we should hear with candor; viewing things in the most favorable light, and abstaining from ill-natured remarks on little defects.

We should attend with humility and meekness. Rom. xii. 16. James i. 21. In case the minister should advance something that does not accord with our own sentiments, we are not instantly to set him down for an erroneous person, but rather admit the thought, that ('tis more than possible) we ourselves may have been mistaken: Of course for our further satisfaction, we should go to him in private, and talk over the matter with a christian spirit, and a mind open to conviction. (*i*)—Moreover, hear with self-application. Let us not attend so much to our neighbor's concern in the word preached, as to forget our own. And supposing the discourse is peculiarly adapted to ourselves, we should not be displeased, and turn our backs upon the minister, John vi. 66. as thinking that he held us up to public view; but consider it, as a seasonable voice from Heaven, and receive the admonition in the spirit of love. (*k*)—Try the doctrines you hear, not by human standards, not by the sentiments of a Luther, a Calvin, or an Arminius, &c. for these men, however great, wise, and good, were liable to error. But try them by the law and the testimony; try them by the Gospel, those infallible writings of the divinely inspired Apostles. And to know the sense of a particular passage of Scripture examine the connection in which it stands; reflect on the circumstances

(*i*) Where hearers instead of attending to this rule, have either secretly insinuated, or openly spoken things against a minister's doctrine, his usefulness of course has been injured, and perhaps the affair has so affected his mind, as to be a means of shortening his days.

(*k*) It might be frequently the case, that some part of a public discourse may be so exactly suited to the evil conduct of a hearer, that such a hearer might think himself designedly pointed at by the preacher, when the preacher perhaps is entirely ignorant of the matter.

stances of the person or persons to whom it was originally address'd; the time in which it was spoken; compare it with parallel texts, and explain the more difficult by the plainer parts of sacred writ. And if you are still at a loss for the meaning, request the aid of your minister, or some other pious, humble, and judicious friend. And be sure to seek by prayer the illuminations of God's Spirit to lead you into the way of truth.

WE ARE TO ATTEND ON THE WORD WITH A VIEW TO INCREASE OUR KNOWLEDGE OF DIVINE THINGS.—The duty of hearers in this respect, is at once seen, from what the Scripture says of the dreadful consequences of religious ignorance, Hos. iv. 6.—from the reproofs address'd to such christians whose improvement was far from being answerable to their opportunities, 1 Cor. xv. 34. Heb. v. 12.—from the exhortations that are given to grow in christian knowledge, Prov. ii. 1. 2 Pet. i. 5. and a promise to succeed our endeavors, Hosea vi. 3.—from the commendation bestowed on christians who made it their daily practice to search the sacred oracles, Acts xvii. 11. and from the specified end of the ministerial office. Eccles. xii. 9. Jer. ii. 8. 1 Tim. ii. 7.

Religious knowledge is of the utmost importance to mankind: For 'tis a means appointed by God "to purify the heart from sin, and to direct the course of the life." (a) 2 Cor. vii. 1. 'Tis the food of the mind, 1 Tim. iv. 6. most pleasant food, Jer. xv. 16. This is eminently the case as to the knowledge of *the Gospel of the grace of God*, when sanctified to the soul. But if we do not strive to get know-

(a) It may be said, that there is sometimes considerable knowledge, where the practice is wanting. This is granted. But it only shews that an invaluable talent may be misimprov'd.—The tendency of knowledge is undeniably good.—The person that has fed upon it by close meditation join'd with fervent prayer, can bear witness to its excellency.—It has in a great variety of instances (with the divine blessing) wrought the most noble effects in the tempers, and lives of men.

knowledge, how can we expect that it should be sanctified to us? (b)---'Tis not with us (remember) as 'twas with the apostles, they indeed had such supernatural assistance, as rendered their own endeavors less necessary. Yet one of a distinguished rank, who lived in primitive times, and enjoyed the miraculous influences of the Spirit, is commanded to give attention to reading, and meditation, &c. (c) that his profiting might appear unto all, 1 Tim. iv. 13—16.†

To the end that we might advance in christian knowledge by the word preached, we are to use every proper means to assist the memory.----We should have our Bibles with us, to turn to the proofs, as they are mentioned by the minister: frequently recollect in the course of the sermon the heads, and particulars in their order, or any sentiment delivered, which was peculiarly suited to us. Or if we are able let us commit these things to writing.—When ministers preach two or three sermons on a text, in the last discourse (it may be) they repeat
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(b) “ Tho’ you may be sincere christians, yet the less you know of God, and of his word, and ways, and the less you do for him, and his service,—the less happiness you will be capable of enjoying.” MR. ORTON.

(c) This may teach us, that ministers unless called to preach unexpectedly, and are so circumstanced, as not to be able to make previous preparation, should be provided with proper matter, method, &c. before they enter the pulpit.—To make it a common practice to speak in public, without giving a close attention to the subject before hand, and trusting to sudden suggestions, may be deemed serving God with that which cost us nought; and we are in danger of uttering something rashly, which might lead christians of low abilities into great error.—St. Paul’s advice to Timothy deserves frequent recollection. 2 Tim. ii. 15.—As to preaching without notes, where the subject has been well digested, and there is sufficient strength of memory, we are so far from objecting to it, that in our humble opinion it may have its advantages; particularly for introducing a pertinent and striking thought, that may arise in a minister’s mind whilst addressing the auditory.

† See p. 99, 108.

some of the leading and most momentous thoughts, that have been enlarged upon before, Phil. iii. 1. then is the time for perfecting yourselves in the former part of the subject. (d)---Let public hearing be followed with private reflection, and serious converse with your friends on the minister's discourse †---- considering the sermons you hear on the Sabbath as a part of your spiritual food for the ensuing days of the week, you should meditate upon them when you retire to your beds, Psal. lxxiii. 6. and think of them also in your work, so far as does not interfere with the business in hand. This method would both further you in knowledge, and be a good expedient (as remark'd elsewhere) to keep out vain thoughts.

Let me then most earnestly beseech you, Sirs, to receive the word of exhortation, and aim to advance in divine knowledge by your attendance on public instructions. This is not only for your personal benefit, but will render you more useful as heads of families, more useful as members of religious society, more useful to your neighbors, especially when you visit them in a season of affliction. To which we add, that an extensive knowledge may prevent your imitating the example of some hearers, of a forward temper, who often find fault with what is deliver'd; for want of a more thorough acquaintance with the word of God.-----We shall close this head with the following texts. Isai. xlii. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 2. *By which also ye are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.* Heb. ii. 1. *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed, to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*

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(d) Says a judicious and aged minister, preachers should take care that their "divisions be few, short, and plain" and were a recapitulation made towards the close of the sermon, serious hearers may be both edified, and pleased.

† See page 66.

WE SHOULD HEAR WITH A RESOLUTION BY DIVINE ASSISTANCE(*e*) TO REDUCE WHAT IS SPOKEN TO PRACTICE.----Some may imagine, that the end of their going to a place of worship is answered, if their passions are struck; if they shed tears of sorrow, or joy, whilst an awful threatening, or delightful promise is sounding in their ears. We own that 'tis agreeable to be touch'd in this manner.---" 'Tis a sign that such are not given up by the Spirit of God to a judicial hardness of heart. But then we are not to lay the stress of our hopes upon any impressions made on the natural affections, unless they are productive of holy fruits." Mat. xiii. 20.

The great thing, is to hear and obey.---To illustrate this point familiarly.---Were any of us, who are masters, to call our servants before us from time to time, and order them so and so, we should expect to be obeyed. Instead of this, were they only to give us the attentive hearing and fair promises, and neglect our business, we should consider our authority as contemned, and manifest marks of displeasure towards them.

Thus

(*e*) When we are attending on the word, we should join prayer to our holy resolves against such sins, and in favor of every way of our duty as may be pointed out to us.—Thus for example, if the minister is treating of some evil course, and the conscience of a hearer says—you are the guilty person, let such an one immediately make this short address to God—" O Lord may the present discourse be a means of raising in my breast an hatred to my sins." " Help me to overcome this, and every iniquity." Or should the minister be displaying the beauties of some christian grace, the language may be, " O thou fountain of grace! grant that this grace might be in me and abound." " Implant each divine virtue in my heart, and cause them to flourish." Or if the preacher is inculcating some duty in which we are defective, be it charity, family prayer, or the like; the request should be, " O God incline my heart to keep this law." " Yea may I keep all thy precepts, and greatly delight in them." In brief when a sentence that is delivered strikes us more than common or is quite adapted to our state, secretly to lift up the soul to God, in such short ejaculations as the preceding, is the way for the word preached to become a favor of life.

Thus when the divine Master calls upon men, to appear before him in his House, and makes known his mind and will to them, by the mouth of the minister, he may well expect obedience to be paid to his word. Whereas if we only hear his commands with seeming regard, but do them not, the divine authority is despised, and we expose ourselves to the terrors of the Almighty. Hear and obey is the concurrent language of Scripture. Ezek. xxxiii. 31. Luke xi. 28. Mat. vii. 24, 25, &c. "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock," and James i. 22. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

THE WORD PREACHED SHOULD BE FOLLOWED WITH PRIVATE MEDITATION, AND PRAYER.—Many seem to apprehend that the business of the Sabbath is over when they have been at church, or meeting, both parts of the day. Accordingly they spend the remainder, either in the fields for pleasure, or in making common visits, (*f*) or else at home conversing

(*f*) "Were our companions religious, and our conversation edifying (says Mr. TURNER), I should make no scruple to give my voice in favor of Sunday visits. But alas! where do we find such company? When do we hear such conversation? The general conversation at those seasons, is about "worldly matters." And is not this 'utterly' inconsistent with the *negative* law relating to the Sabbath? Isai. lviii. 13. *Not finding thy own pleasure; not speaking thy own words*; conversing on sublime and heavenly subjects, not on low earthly affairs, which having no reference to the Creator's honor are therefore called *thy own*.—It also breaks the *positive* law of the Sabbath.—Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; devote the whole of it to sacred purposes. Neither will the whole day be too long, if we make conscience of discharging the several duties of religion; reading, examining our hearts and ways, &c. teaching our children and domestics.—We may further observe, that these dissipating interviews are the ravenous birds which follow the Seedsmen (represented in the parable Mat. xiii. 19.) and devour the grain: So that nothing takes root: No fruit of faith, or love is produced.

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ing about trade, news, &c.—Some as soon as they leave one place of worship (and this perhaps before divine service is concluded) instantly repair to another. *(g)* Thus secret meditation, and family instruction, *(h)* are neglected. Now as for secret meditation, what duty is more reasonable and necessary.

F f

cessary.

—Let the professing christian likewise reflect, that on a dying bed, the mis-improvement of all our time will be most bitterly regretted: How much more the mis-improvement of those hours which God himself has set apart for the noblest purposes, and is wont to bless in an especial manner? While others were seeking the pearl of great price, and gathering those treasures of wisdom and grace, which endure to everlasting life, I alas, was squandering away the precious opportunities in very vanity. To see the curtain of time dropping; to see a vast eternity opening before us; and to have such reflections haunting our conscience: This will cause misery not to be expressed, create anguish not to be conceived." See Mr. TURNER's short meditations on select portions of Scripture.

(g) If we mistake not, the custom of going from place to place, and spending nearly the whole of sacred time in hearing, prevails particularly in London.—This course proves an obstacle to the increase of religious knowledge. For as it hath been said of persons who wish to be universal readers, that tho' they read a vast deal, yet for want of giving themselves time to digest what they read, are little the better for it: So numbers who hear much (for want of time for serious reflection on divine truths) their knowledge is small and superficial. Such may imagine that their zeal for hearing is owing to their great love to the word.—But will not a genuine love to the oracles of God, engage us to meditate, as well as hear? Examine and see whether the real motive is not novelty and curiosity.—“ Perhaps the minister is one who has been seldom or never heard before; or there is something peculiar in his address,” or in the place where divine worship is to be performed. Now if we are induced by any thing of this sort, to lay aside, or slightly to attend to so evident a duty, as secret retirement.—*Are we not carnal?* 1 Cor. iii. 4.

(h) Certainly there is a very close connection between public and family religion. We see how this connection was observ'd in David's time, particularly by the king himself.—“ When he brought the Ark from the house of Obededom to Zion, (the grand public solemnity being ended) it is said, all the people departed every man to his own house; and that David also returned to bless his house. 1 Chron. xvi. 43. Or to join

cessary.—Did we apply for advice to a friend, in our temporal affairs, on leaving him, would it not be natural for us to reflect—how far the advice given answered to our case?—So when we go to the House of God, to ask counsel of him, respecting our immortal interest, is it not equally, or much more becoming (upon our return home) to meditate on the instructions that have been given us by the minister, in God's name?—Doubtless, we should retire to our chambers, and converse with our own hearts in the following manner: “The minister

join with his family in prayer to God, for a blessing upon himself and them, and on the public services of the day; and we are to suppose, that he also attended to other family duties, such as examination, and religious instruction. Psal. lxxviii. 3, 4, 5.—Are not heads of families taught by the example before us, that when they and their families return from the place of public worship, on the Lord's day, they are seriously to engage in domestic devotions. On these occasions, we are not only to read and pray with our families, but moreover to examine them respecting the public work of the day. Some perhaps can only repeat the text; “Despise not the day of small things.” Others may be able to mention the leading heads of a sermon, and at length the inferences drawn from them. We might occasionally inquire, whether any of them are able to comprehend the difference between primary and secondary truths; and if they did not, we should inform them, that *primary truths*, mean such truths, as are plainly express'd in Scripture, and delivered in the language of Scripture; and that by *secondary truths*, you mean, those inferences and assertions, which preachers, or others may deduce from, or attempt to support by the word of God. We must acquaint them, that much more regard is due to truths of the first class, than to those of the second; and that these *second* should be examined with great care by Scripture: remembering that they are the assertions of men, who are liable to error.—We should try likewise to bring home those things to their consciences, by general questions like these.—“Are spiritual blessings the blessings you most esteem and seek?”—“While your sole confidence, and expectation are placed on Jesus Christ, as your Advocate with the Father, “are you constantly concerned to do those things that are pleasing in his sight?”—Were this method of examination commonly practised, it may be productive of eminent benefit to children and servants, and to heads of families themselves; and may also be of great service to ministers, by stirring them up,
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minister to day delivered such and such things: They were spoken to me in particular: Yes, he touch'd on a sin with which I am chargeable; he discoursed of a duty that I have left undone; and he most solemnly declared, that the path in which I have been walking leads to destruction, eternal destruction."—When one has mused for a while on these, or such like interesting points, and finds himself deeply affected, Psalm xxxix. 3. let meditation be closed with prayer: (i) For your encouragement herein, call to remembrance Matt. vii. 7. Luke xiii. 1. And that you may pray with a degree of fervor

to take good heed in their public discourses, to speak as become the oracles of God—to bring forth from sabbath to sabbath, such spiritual provision, *that the flock of God might be fed with knowledge and understanding*; that under the divine influences, hearers may become *skilful in the word of righteousness, and grow in grace*.—To examination, seasonable exhortations, admonitions and encouragements should be added. 1 Thess. 5, 14, Let your authority be mingled with gentleness; and O recommend what you inculcate, by your own examples.—Since it appears, that the sabbath is designed partly to be the sabbath of the Lord in our dwellings.—Lord's-day evening lectures, however necessary for those who live in irreligious families, are not so for serious heads of families, if hereby they are prevented from the due discharge of those family duties we have now been enforcing. See a Letter to the Heads of Christian Families, by Mr. Martin.

(i) Shall introduce here, some hints respecting our behavior in public prayer.—Every serious mind must be shocked at the behavior of those, whose practice it is, during public prayer, to suffer their eyes to run to and fro thro' the assembly; loll upon their pews; or show a careless air of countenance. I must therefore recommend it to hearers, to keep their eyes closed, or so covered, or bent downward, during prayer, that their devotion might not be prevented by persons coming into the assembly, &c. In this view, some advise the kneeling posture, where it can be used.—The thoughts should be closely applied to the words, which the minister expresseth before God, that we may *pray with the understanding*, 1 Cor. xiv, 15: And of course the minister should take care not to use language above the capacities of the unlearned, nor to be too quick in his pronunciation; see p. 73, 74, 77. We should give an hearty *assent* to the truths declared in public prayer, and an hearty *consent* to the several requests that are express'd in it; or we should say *Amen* to the different parts of the prayer;

fervor reflect, that your concerns with God are infinitely important. †——O the thousands of precious souls, that are hastening forwards to awful ruin, for want of consideration, even that consideration

prayer; for the word *Amen* includes both these senses. To illustrate the matter a little, suppose a minister to be adoring the perfections of God, acknowledging that he is almighty, all wise, perfectly good and gracious; to this you may secretly say, *Amen*, that is, ‘you believe what is spoken to be true’.—Again, is a minister praising God for our creation, preservation; for our temporal or spiritual blessings? We are to add *Amen* to this, or to say, ‘Lord I have received these mercies from thee: Thanks be to God for these benefits.’—Again, is the minister confessing sin (which confession should always be made in the most general terms that it may suit the case of all as far as may be) when he is thus acknowledging sin, we are to add our *Amen*, or secretly to say, ‘Lord I am the person; against thee I have thus sinned.’—Again, doth the minister pray that God would be merciful to us and forgive us, that he would subdue our sins, and renew and sanctify our hearts, &c.? We are to add our *Amen*, or to say, ‘Let it be so, this is what I earnestly desire.’—Doth he pray for a blessing on our bodies, on our substance, or our families? We are to add our *Amen*, or ‘So be it’ or ‘Lord grant this or the other earthly blessing, to me and my fellow worshippers, if thou knowest it to be good for us.’—Doth the minister express in prayer resignation to the divine will? Our language should be *Amen*, or, ‘Lord I desire to submit, and give up all to thee.’—Doth he say, ‘Let thy name O Lord be praised?’ *Amen* should we say, or, ‘Lord let it be praised.’—Once more, doth the minister make intercession for others, for the world, for the church, for our own country, for persons in public stations, or in private afflictions? To each of these intercessions, we are to join our *Amen*, or to say, ‘Suit thy mercies to these several cases.’—In favor of this use of the word *Amen*, see the 16th verse of the chapter quoted above. It was a custom among the Jews and first Christians, for the people to say *Amen* at the conclusion of every prayer, and it is to be wish’d that this also were still done in all christian assemblies.—There are some persons, who thro’ bodily infirmities, &c. may find it very difficult to keep their minds attentive to a whole prayer; I would recommend it to such, secretly to repeat the prayer after the minister.—It is proper in this connection; to exhort hearers to great attention while the blessing is pronounced at the conclusion of public worship—hastening away, or getting into a posture for removal (at such a time) is highly irreverent. Mr. Orton on Christian worship.—For what relates to singing the divine praises in religious assemblies, see the close of this treatise.

ration which might stir them up, to call upon God that they perish not.---How well does the ancient complaint suit the present day, Deut. xxxii. 29.--To give weight to the above exhortation, let me cite the words of an inspired Apostle, 2 Tim. ii. 7. *Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.*

ONCE MORE, WE SHOULD BE STEADY AND CONSTANT IN OUR ATTENDANCE ON THE MINISTER WE HAVE CHOSEN, 2 Tim. iv. 3. By steadiness is to be understood, our keeping close to his ministrations; avoiding the practice of those, who frequently leave their own minister, and perhaps go far abroad to hear on the Sabbath.---This is a conduct to be guarded against on many accounts--particularly we should beware of acting thus, for the sake of the religious interest to which we profess to belong; seeing irregularity and confusion may be introduced by the influence of our example on fellow hearers: nay ('tis possible) we may be the instruments of its entire subversion.---We should beware of acting thus, for the sake of our children and servants; for when we go far from home, they are like to be neglected in more respects than one.---We should beware of such a practice for our own sakes: By going to and fro, we may loose the connection, and gain a very imperfect idea of the minister's subject, for want of attending to the whole. Or, if we needlessly betake ourselves to a considerable distance, on a Lord's day, when we return home, we may be so much fatigued, as to be unfit for the private duties of the evening; or we may have but little time for them.---Whether these are not great evils let our consciences decide.

Further, we should (where it can properly be done) attend public worship both parts of the day: Our duty on this head indeed has in effect been already prov'd above.---There are numbers, who attend only in the afternoon, and are constantly absent from
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the morning service, who it is to be feared are incapable of rendering a sufficient reason for their practice. We should consider, that those sermons we neglect, were (it may be) more especially adapted to our spiritual circumstances; and therefore we cannot tell, how great a loss we hereby sustain:---Should any say in general terms, that they are necessarily detained from public worship, on the former part of the day.---Let me ask, would the prospect of hearing a stranger, or of otherwise gratifying your curiosity bring you out in a morning? If so, say no more that you are under a necessity of staying at home---for can it be a justifiable necessity, such a necessity as you will venture to plead before the Judge of all?

A SERIOUS ADMONITION TO THOSE WHO MISPEND THE LORD'S DAY.

THERE are some who attend no where; others who go to a place of worship now and then.—One you may see on a journey, another following his common business, in violation of the laws both of God and man, (*k*) a third at his recreations, or profaning the Sabbath at feasts, wakes, &c. (*l*) To all Sab-

(*k*) “ Our laws ordain that no tradesman, artificer, workman, laborer, or other person whatsoever, shall exercise any worldly labor, business, or work at their ordinary calling, upon the Lord’s day, or any part thereof, under a penalty. No Butcher is allowed to sell meat; and no person whatsoever is to expose to sale, any ware, merchandise, fruits, herbs, or goods whatsoever, on the Sabbath day, or any part thereof, upon pain of forfeiting the same.”

By the way, since the merciful Creator intended the Sabbath as a day of rest for cattle as well as men, it is (as one says) a degree of cruelty, as well as a breach of the divine commandment, to use our cattle on Sundays, except in cases concerning which conscience bears witness, that they are cases of absolute necessity.”

(*l*) Certain persons, who are pretty regular in their attendance on public ordinances, yet (where the case does not require it,

Sabbath breakers we would say, consider how highly you dishonor the infinitely glorious Deity whilst you trample on this command!---the horrid ingratitude you are also guilty of towards him, to whom you are indebted for every moment of your time.---Consider what a vast injury you do to yourselves; you loose all the happiness that flows from that invaluable promise Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.---and expose your souls to the divine indignation. And are you not also acting the part of enemies to your families, neighbors, and country. Neh. xiii. 17, 18. *What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus? and did not our God bring all this evil upon us?---Yet you bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath.* O let the time past of your lives wherein you have *polluted the Sabbath*, be reckoned more than enough to suffice.---Pray unto God with earnestness for the forgiveness of all your sins, and especially for the contempt you have cast on his holy day. Entreat him for Christ's sake to deliver you, not only from the guilt, but likewise from the power and defilement of sin; to restore you to spiritual health, i. e. to make you holy; then your minds will relish the provisions of his House, love the place where his honor dwells, and you will call the Sabbath a delight, attending to the duties of it yourselves, and persuade others to do the same. (m)

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it, but merely to save their common time) will take physic on a Lord's day. Such should reflect, whether this be a likely way, to obtain a divine blessing on the means.

(m) As we are to beware of Sabbath breaking ourselves, so we are to take care that we are not the occasion of others falling into this sin. It may be ask'd, are not those chargeable with both, who employ barbers on a Lord's day? For the consequence is, numbers of that profession are depriv'd of the benefit of public worship.—Some may plead as an excuse, that they order the hair-dresser to come long before church time.—But at least does not your example encourage others to have them during the morning service, or perhaps when afternoon service is

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AN ADDRESS TO SUCH AS STRICTLY OBSERVE
THE SABBATH.

BE thankful for the institution of a Sabbath, and that you enjoy it peaceably. As a mean to increase the gratitude of your hearts, on this account, *call to remembrance the former days.*—"The christians who lived under heathen Emperors, when they attempted to celebrate a Sabbath, were liable to be disturbed by those around them: Our protestant ancestors too at the beginning of the reformation from popery, were exposed to interruptions.---And still more lately, when devout persons assembled together for the worship of God, it was at the hazard of their property and liberty, if not of their lives."

See that the work of the Sabbath has a suitable influence on your temper and behavior through the whole week.---O let it never be said of you, that you are vain in your conversation, unjust in your dealings, intemperate, idle and unprofitable, harsh and unmerciful, or the like.---But rather may it be said, that your conversation is agreeable to your profession, that you are diligent in your callings, punctually just in all your transactions, temperate in
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just ready to begin?---I recollect the case of a barber in the West, who refused attending his customers on the Sabbath, and I never heard that his worldly circumstances were the worse for it. Let those of the trade imitate so worthy an example, and Providence will not forget their conscientiousness.

"Tho' every body knows that it is lawful for physicians, apothecaries, &c. to visit the sick on the Lord's day, yet it must be admitted, (says a serious author) that wisdom and piety require, that if possible they contrive their visits so, as to have time to join in public worship. And care should be taken by them, that their visits on that day, be acts of religion and charity, and not made merely as the common labor of their calling and to get money. There have been several instances of pious physicians, who, sensible of this, have devoted all the fees they received on the Lord's day to charitable uses."

all things, benevolent and charitable, tender heart-ed and sympathizing.—Thus, Sirs, you will honor the Sabbath; most effectually recommend the observation of it to the rising generation; and know the exalted, the joyful hope, that you are indeed *fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.*

A PRAYER before public Worship.

GRACIOUS Lord my God, *who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.*—O that my heart might be prepar'd to seek thee this day.--Make it the language of my soul, *How amiable are thy tabernacles O Lord of hosts: A day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere, I had rather be a door-keeper in the House of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.*—Assist thy ministering servant in *speaking wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness.*—Help me to *hear and to understand*, and may I *receive the truth with humility, meekness, and love*; and *be saved by it.* And grant that *the word preached may profit all who shall hear it.* These things I humbly ask, thro' Jesus thine own Son, and my High Priest, who is over the House of God. Amen.

A PRAYER after public Worship.

GREAT, merciful and long-suffering Jehovah! Enable me to give such an earnest heed to the things which I have heard, that I might not let them slip: And may I remember thy commandments to do them. Aid me to walk in all thy ways, and to serve thee with all my heart, and to cleave unto thee.---Be with ministers in general, and with thy servant on whom I have attended in particular: May he not seek the praise of men, but the honor which cometh from God. Make him wise to win souls, and watchful over them; may he shew himself a pattern of good works, and hereafter receive a crown of righteousness.

'Tis my further request, that christians *might be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus, and with one mind, and one mouth glorify God, and promote the common salvation.* And O that the *sound of the Gospel might be heard thro' all the Earth, and thy words reach the ends of the world.* All which, I earnestly implore, in the name of Christ, that *one Mediator betwixt God and man, and who is the Lord of Glory.* Amen.

ON THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM.†

Christian Baptism, is a washing with water, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* (a) Matt. xxviii. 19.

Some who offer their children to this ordinance, seem to entertain wrong notions of it. As when parents imagine that the baptism of an infant consists IN JUST GIVING THE NAME. Whereas *naming* the infant on this occasion, is a thing distinct from the ordinance itself; so that the baptism would be perfect, if there was no mention made of it, but the minister was to express himself thus—*Child, I baptize*

† 'Tis my intention to treat the subject practically, and with a view to promote mutual edification and love; and I hope the truly candid will meet with nothing, which may give them reason to say that the intention has been forgotten.

(a) This ordinance is administered in the name of the Father, because the salvation which the Gospel contains proceeded from the wisdom and grace of the Father. 2 Cor. v. 18. We are baptized in the name of the Son, because it was revealed and preached by the Son of God, and it is thro' his obedience unto death, we are made partakers of it. Heb. ii. 3. Ephes. i. 7. Rom. vi. 23. And we are also baptiz'd in the name of the Holy Spirit, because the truth of this word of salvation was abundantly establish'd by the miraculous influences of the Spirit, poured out on the Apostles, in consequence of which, they were capable of healing diseases, raising the dead, speaking divers tongues, they had never learnt, and of foretelling things to come. Heb. ii. 4. And it is this sacred Agent, by whom we are sanctified, 1 Pet. i. 2. and assisted in our conflicts with sin, Rom. viii. 13. and in becoming more meet to inherit salvation with eternal glory. Ephes. iii. 16.

tize thee, &c.—However, as the Jews named their children at the time of *circumcision*, Luke ii. 21. the same custom has been adopted by christians at the time of *baptism*, and when 'tis considered as an address to the person calling him by his name, rather than as *the manner of giving a name to him*, it is used with propriety. (*b*)

Again, we conceive those to be mistaken, who lay such a vast stress upon baptism, as if it were NECESSARY TO THE SALVATION OF INFANTS.—Nevertheless, we own that the ordinance as applied to infants may answer several worthy ends of religion.—For example, as infants suffer in consequence of their relation to Adam, baptism may be viewed as an outward sign which movingly sets forth before the eyes of parents, the grace of God towards infants; or their interest in the blessings which come by Christ, Rom. v. 14—19. Mark x. 14, and Luke xviii. 15, 16. (*c*)—The sacred vows too made by parents on this occasion, tend to quicken them in their duty towards their off-spring, Prov. xxxi. 2. Psal. cxix. 106.—And since baptism is an obligation to after holiness of life (like circumcision, Gal. v. 3.) (*d*) is not peculiar weight hereby given to the admonitions ministers, or others address to these children, as they grow up?

Our general idea of baptism is—that 'tis AN ORDINANCE OF DEDICATION.—“ This notion of christian baptism naturally arises from the manner of St. Paul's

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(*b*) Dr. DODDRIGE in his preaching Lectures, advises his pupils (when settled in the ministry) to take care that the name of the child be so mentioned, that it may evidently be seen, that the end of the ordinance is not *giving the name*, but something far more important.

(*c*) Some may imagine, that those who do not hold with infant baptism, entertain very gloomy sentiments about the future state of infants. But this is an error. For (among others) Dr. STENNETT has observed, that he thinks it highly probable from these passages, that all who die in their infancy are admitted to Heaven—being fitted for it by the holy Spirit. STENNETT on Baptism, p. 54, 64.—The above scriptural hints may serve to satisfy the minds of such christian parents, whose infants have been suddenly remov'd by death, before they had an opportunity of presenting them to God in the ordinance of baptism.

(*d*) Read also Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12, 14, 15.

putting that question to the Corinthians, *Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?*—The same notion is confirmed, by his saying, *I thank God that I baptized none of you; but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say, that I had baptized in my own name,* 1 Cor. i. 12, 13, 15. This he said not in disparagement of baptism, but because they had accidentally made an ill use of it; and some amongst them had set him up for the head of a party. Since therefore things had so fallen out, St. Paul was very glad, that he had given his enemies so little handle to accuse him of making a party to himself, and devoted to his own interest. This he calls *baptizing in his own name*. And thus his words plainly represent baptism as an ordinance of dedication.*

If the party baptized be *an adult*, he is said to dedicate himself to God.—2 Cor. viii. 5.

If it be *an infant*, such an infant is considered as devoted to God by its parents.—1 Sam. i. 28.

Therefore when parents present their children to be baptized, the language of their hearts should be “We give up our off-spring to God; receive them into the number of thy children.—O that they may partake of those inestimable blessings which proceed from the Father, Son, and Holy-Ghost.” At the same time, parents bring themselves under a solemn engagement, to use their best endeavors (whilst sup-
plicating the aids of divine grace) for training up their children in the ways of religion. *This* is implied in the act of dedication.

As *adults* are baptized on their own profession of faith, *children* are admitted to baptism on the professed faith of their parents.—For this reason, 'tis highly proper, that christian parents should be acquainted with some plain and solid arguments for the truth and divine authority of Scripture, and that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, foretold by the prophets, and the appointed Savior of the world. (f)

* Mr. Twocood on Baptism, part the second.

(f) The usefulness of such knowledge is still more apparent when we consider—That if we are tempted by Satan to question the

Was a minister then to ask parents on their requesting the baptism of a child—WHY THEY BELIEVED JESUS OF NAZARETH TO BE THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD AND THE SAVIOR OF MEN? Those parents should be able to make some such a reply as the following :

Answer 1. Jesus wrought miracles—he gave sight to the blind; enabled the dumb to speak; and raised the dead; particularly Lazarus, who had been dead four days. Now to these miracles Christ appeals, as a proof of his divine mission, (g) John v. 36.

2. The excellency of his doctrine, and the holiness of his life is another evidence, that Jesus came from God. Even the officers who were sent to apprehend him, were oblig'd to confess, that *never man spake like this man*, John vii. 46.—His doctrine tended to the glory † of his Father, and to promote the holiness, and consequently the happiness of mankind. In this view, our Lord speaks of it, as a proof that he was a true Teacher, John vii. 18.—As his doctrine was most excellent, (h) his life was free from sin.

the truth of Scripture, we may be able in some measure to overcome the temptation by calling to remembrance those familiar evidences—Or that in case we are in the company of any who speak against divine Revelation, we may be qualified to return a proper answer—Beside, we have Scripture precept and example to excite us to acquire this kind of knowledge. 1 Pet. iii. 15. Acts xvii. 10, 11.

(g) “ The effects and plain tokens of these miracles (says DANTE, a celebrated ancient writer) are now visible in the different parts of the world. For if the world was induced to receive the religion of Jesus Christ without miracles (a religion altogether ungrateful to flesh and blood, opposite to the prepossessions, projects and interests of worldly men) I say, if the world was induced to receive such a religion without miracles, that must be a miracle indeed! the greatest of all miracles that ever the Sun beheld!”

† “ As we argue the truth of the christian religion, from its tendency to advance the glory of God; so we may infer the falsehood of the Mahometan religion, from its being calculated for Mahomet's grandeur, wealth, and pleasure, and to raise a wordly dominion.”

(h) The intelligent christian will hardly be displeased with the following quotation from the works of Dr. CHANDLER,—“ The excellency of the Gospel is apparent from its completeness and absolute perfection, so that 'tis in nothing defective, relating either to principles, duties, motives, and encouragements. This completeness of the christian religion is the more remarkable,

Hear his appeal to his enemies, John viii. 46, and also the confession of that disciple, who betrayed him, Matt. xxvii. 4.—Surely, if Jesus preached so very excellent a doctrine, and led a most holy life, those are things which shew that God was with him, and that he came in the name of God, agreeable to his own declaration, John v. 43.

3. The voice which repeatedly came from Heaven, proclaiming Jesus to be the Son of God, is an additional evidence, Matt. iii. 16, 17. Chap. xvii. 5. This divine testimony borne to Jesus is noticed by the Apostle Peter, 2 Epist. Chap. i. 16, &c.

4. The wonderful things which happened at the death of Christ, are to be considered as a further proof of his divine mission, viz. *The darkness over the whole land of Judea*, which lasted from the sixth hour to the ninth, or from twelve to three o'clock in the afternoon. Now this could not be a natural darkness, occasioned by an eclipse of the Sun, because we know it was then full Moon, when the Moon being opposite to the Sun could not possibly hide the Sun from any part of the Earth. Therefore it follows, that the darkness which overspread Judea at that time was raised by the power of God, contrary to the common course of nature.

There was also an earthquake and the rocks rent.—Mr. Fleming tells us “that an unbeliever travelling thro’ that part of the world, was converted by viewing one of those rocks which still remains torn asunder, not in the weakest place, but cross the veins, a plain proof that it was done in a supernatural manner.” These

considering the infinite varieties of religion that then obtained in the world: The gross corruptions introduced into the religion of the Jews, the innumerable superstitions that prevailed among all the nations of the Earth, and the contrary errors that were taught by the wise and learned men of those times, who differed not more from each other than from the truth, &c. At this time, our blessed Lord appears in the world, full of grace and truth, and in the short ministry of about three years taught so perfect a scheme of religion, as made up all that was defective or misrepresented in the Mosaic dispensation, and conducted men by an infallible clew thro’ all the intricate snares that the superstitions of nations, or the subtilties of Philosophy had created.”

These amazing prodigies made even the Heathen centurion, who kept guard at the place of execution to cry out, *truly this Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God.* Matt. xxvii. 54.

5. We may add to the above, the testimony which John the Baptist bore to Jesus Christ.----We learn from the New Testament, that John was a very extraordinary person himself, Matt. xi. 11. One who had such a regard for the cause of truth and righteousness, that he was not afraid to reprove persons in the highest stations, when the case required it, Matt. xiv. 4. And not only the Evangelists, but likewise Josephus the Jewish historian bears witness to John's eminent holiness, styling him *the best of men.*

Certainly then the testimony of such a one, on the present point, is most worthy of regard. Hear him therefore---*John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,* John i. 29. Compare this with Acts xiii. 24, &c.

Now tho' we never saw the miracles† of Christ, or heard the voice from Heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God, &c. yet we receive our account of these matters, from persons who heard the one, and were eye witnesses of the other. 1 John i. 1. And we have abundant reason to believe they were thoroughly persuaded of the truth of those things which they published, seeing hereby they exposed themselves to disgrace, deep poverty, severe persecutions, and death. 1 Cor. iv. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.—If we credit some ecclesiastical writers, all the Apostles and Penmen of the New Testament (*i*) except
John

† See page 229, note (g).

(*i*) For our greater satisfaction, and to shew the deep reverence and high esteem we should have for the Gospel, shall take some brief notice of what relates to the canon of the New Test.—the evidence we have for the genuineness of each Book—the dependance we may place on our own translation of them, &c.

John suffered martyrdom.—I might have observed that the Spirit of piety towards God, and of goodwill

By the *canon* † of the New Testament, we mean those Books that were written by the Apostles, or others under their inspection,* and published to the world, as an unerring rule of faith and practice; by which the truth or falsehood of other writings was to be determined.—If we look into Church History, we shall find that the same Books (Gospels and Epistles) which now make up our New Testament, were received as *canonical* by the primitive christians.—The *four Gospels, the Acts, thirteen Epistles of Paul, one of Peter, one of John*, were received upon such evidence, that Eusebius a most accurate Critic, (who lived in the 4th Century) could not learn that they had ever been disputed; And afterwards the remaining Books of the New Testament, viz. *Hebrews, James, the second of Peter, the second and third of John, and the Revelations*, were admitted as genuine, and added to the rest. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. L. III. Chap. 25. compared with Chap. 3. of the same book. Origen, who lived in the beginning of the 3d Century, mentions every book of the New Testament in different parts of his works; and in the christian writers of the two first Centuries, there appear to be either allusions to, or quotations from almost the whole of the present Canon.

That the New Testament as we now have it in the original is *uncorrupted*, or in the main such as it was when it came out of the hands of those by whom it was written—might be proved thus—From the first ages they were read in the churches; just as Moses and the Prophets were in the Jewish synagogues.—They were presently spread far and wide as the boundaries of the Church were increased.—They were early translated into other languages, of which translations some remain to this day.—Since this was the case, how could any considerable corruption possibly be made in the writings of the New Testament?—Besides,

† The word *Canon* is originally Greek, and did in that language commonly denote, that which was a rule or standard, by which other things were to be examined and judged. And inasmuch as the books of divine inspiration contained the most important rules of all others, the collection of them in time obtained the name of the *Canon*, and each book was called *canonical*. Mr. JER. JONES.

* Tho' two of the writers of the New Testament, Mark and Luke, were not Apostles, yet they were the *companions* of such, and their gospels must have been perused and approved by the Apostles, as is certain from their being universally received in the earliest ages, which is the same as if these Gospels had been dictated by the Apostles themselves.

will to men, which appears thro' the whole writings of the Apostles, and the ingenuous manner in which

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sides, there have been numerous quotations from the New Testament, in christian writers of all the latter-ages, and even from the beginning of the third Century or earlier, and all those do in the main agree with our present copies, in sense, if not in words. We readily allow, that the hand of a translator, or of a printer, might chance in some places to insert one letter or word for another; and indeed the various readings (of *this*, as well as of all other ancient books) prove that this has sometimes happened. Nevertheless, those various readings are generally of little importance, and when copies come to be compared, there is often so great a number on one side, against those of the other, that it is easy to settle the true reading.

With respect to the *translation* of the New Testament now in our hands, (says one eminent for learning and piety) I can solemnly assure the unlearned christian, that on a diligent comparison of our translation with the original, I find *that* of the New Testament (and I might also add *that* of the Old) in the main faithful and judicious. But not to rest a matter of such moment on my testimony alone, let me put you in mind, that the agreement of learned men of different denominations and religious opinions, in the use of this same translation, is as great evidence as could reasonably be desired, that such a translation is in the *main* right. 'Tis true, ministers may on some occasions animadvert upon it; but these remarks affect not the fundamentals of religion, and seldom reach any farther than the beauty of a figure, or the connection of an argument. Nay, I can confidently say, that to the best of my knowledge and remembrance, as there is no copy of *the Greek*, so neither is there any *translation* of the New Testament, that I have seen, from which all the principal facts and doctrines of christianity might not be learnt, so far as the knowledge of them is necessary to salvation, or even to some considerable degrees of edification in piety.

Having in a brief manner attempted to prove the *genuineness* of the writings of the New Testament, shall also mention a few words of their *divine authority*.—Our Lord promised his Apostles the gift of the holy Spirit, to lead them into all truth; John xvi. 13 and the Apostles upon several occasions declare that they had this extraordinary guidance.—They call their doctrine *the commandment of the Lord, the wisdom which God had revealed to them by his Spirit*, &c. 1 Cor. xiv. 37. Chap. ii. 5—10. Accordingly the primitive christians speak of the New Testament as the oracles of God, and in some of their councils, it was placed on a throne, to signify their concern, that all their controversies and actions might be determined, and regulated by it. See DODDRIGE on the evidences of christianity.

the Evangelists relate their faults, shew how worthy they are of universal credit.

6. We must not forget, that an argument of very considerable force for the truth of the christian religion may be deduced from certain *prophecies* recorded in the Old Testament. (*k*)—The prophets speak of an illustrious person, whom God would raise up among the Jews; and (besides other particulars) tell us—That he should be born of a virgin; be a worker of miracles; and yet despised and rejected, and at last put to death even by his own people the Jews.—That he should be raised from the dead before his body was corrupted, and received into Heaven.—These prophets also affirm,

(*k*) Permit me to say something here, on the *genuineness* and *inspiration* of the Old Testament.—Ezra is supposed to have collected the books of the Old Testament into one volume, when the prophets Haggai, Malachi, and Zechariah were yet alive; and that by divine inspiration he added certain things after the deaths of the authors.—This volume* was received by the Jewish church as inspired writings, and from hence called by way of eminence *the Scriptures* or *the Writings* §—The divine authority of the Old Testament was acknowledged by Christ and his Apostles. Luke xxiv. 27, 44. 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 19, 20, 21.

That this sacred Volume mentioned by Christ and his Apostles, contained the *same writings* as are found in our Old Testament is evident from hence—Some hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, the sacred Scriptures of the Jews had been translated into the Greek language: Now this same Greek version hath been preserved to our times, and has the very same books of

* To this volume the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews appears expressly to refer. Chap. x. 7.

§ The prophetic parts of Scripture, “such as these relating to the captivity of Israel and Judah, to the judgments threatened against Tyre, Egypt, Nineveh, Babylon, &c. likewise all the prophecies of the New Testament, such as these relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the rejection and dispersion of the Jews and the coming and power of Antichrist.”—I say all the prophecies of Scripture which have been accomplish’d—that *these* were written by inspiration of God is certain from the very nature of the things themselves.—See Mr. KIDDELL on the Inspiration of the Scriptures, and DODDRIGE’s Lectures.

affirm, that after the appearance of this glorious person, whom the Jews stiled the Messiah, the holy Spirit should be poured out on the children of men, in a surprizing manner, that the doctrine of the Messiah should take a vast spread among the Gentiles, who hereby would be brought to the knowledge of the God of Israel.—Now these things have been literally accomplish'd in Jesus of Nazareth. See Matt. i. 18—20, compared with Isaiah vii. 14. —Matt. xi. 4, 5, compared with Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6. —Chap. liii. 3--8, compared with Matt. xiii. 55, &c. Chap. xxvii. 22, 26.—1 Cor. xv. 4--7, compared with Psalm xvi. 10. (l)—Acts i. 9, 10, 11, compared with Psalm cx. 1. (m)——Acts ii. 1--11, compared with Joel

of which our Old Testament is composed. We may also remark, that the Old Testament came early into the hands of the christians, and have continued in their hands ever since; so that the Jews (if they had been thus disposed) could hardly have made any material alteration in them, without its being discovered: That such an alteration has not taken place might be further argued, “from the prophecies still remaining in their Scriptures, concerning the humiliation and sufferings of the Messiah, in which Christians always triumphed, when they disputed with the Jews; because these prophecies (as we have shewn above) have been so exactly accomplished in our blessed Lord. These passages therefore we may assure ourselves would have been the *first* the Jews would have altered, if it had been in their power, or their inclination to do it.”—These hints may suffice to convince us of the great regard due to the Old Testament as well as *the New*, seeing both were divinely inspired, and on that account are eminently stiled *the Scriptures*.

(l) St. Peter has in an admirable manner explained this verse, Acts ii. 22—32.

(m) *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, &c.* So great a King as David (the penman of this psalm) would scarcely have called any man on Earth his Lord.—“It is upon this foundation the argument of our Savior is built, Matt. xxii. 41-46, viz. that the Lord of David here spoken to, could be no other than Christ the Messiah, who is now gone into the Heavens in a human form, and sits at the right hand of God—*there* Stephen the martyr saw him. Acts vii. 55, 56.”

Joel ii. 28--32. (n)—Isaiah xlix. 5, 6, and Dan. vii. 13, 14, (o) compared with Rom. xv. 16--20. Chap. x. 18.

Such reasons as these carry with them convincing evidence, that Jesus of Nazareth is truly the Messiah promised to the Fathers, that he is indeed (as he professed to be) the Son of God, and the Savior of men, “we would therefore maintain a constant regard to the blood and intercession of Jesus, in our approaches to God; seek pardon, peace, and every blessing in this *new and living way*; and by the aids of divine grace obey the holy laws of Christ, our heavenly Prince: And we also purpose to train up our children in the christian faith,”

TO PARENTS.

WHO will deny, but what it is the incumbent duty of parents, closely to attend to the religious education of their children, though few practise it. As this is the great duty of all in general, so peculiarly of those parents, who by desiring their childrens baptism, have laid themselves under voluntary solemn engagements (p) hereto: And consequently “they can no more neglect the religious education of their children, than a person could alienate a sacred oblation from God; without being guilty of sacrilege.” Shall I then earnestly entreat
you

(n) *And it shall come to pass in the last days, &c.* By this expression *in the last days*, Manasseh ben Israel tells us, that all the wise men among the Jews understood the days of the Messiah, or the Christ.

(o) *One like the Son of man came with the clouds of Heaven, &c.* *Anani* or the word which we translate *clouds*, was a known name of the Messiah among the Jewish writers; which proves that they understood this text as spoken of him.

(p) I would importunately request such as are desired to become sponsors, seriously to reflect beforehand, whether they *intend*, or *are able* to fulfil the vows they enter into on those occasions.

you christian parents to apply yourselves to this momentous work.—Bring them betimes to the solemnities of public worship; watch over their behavior whilst there; and see that they are suitably employed when they return home.* Encourage “them to learn their catechism;” examine yourselves into the progress they make, and charge them to remember the commands of God and perform them, Ephes. vi. 4. Urge your dear offspring sometimes by the terrors of the Lord to seek an interest in Christ, flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness: But more frequently persuade them by the charms of divine love and mercy, by the excellency of holiness which is a source of present happiness, and by yonder fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.† Were parents to exert themselves in this manner, they may be the instruments of greatly furthering the labors of ministers, who as under shepherds have received a direction from Christ the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls, to *feed the lambs*. Yet, whilst parents guard against remissness in the discharge of such duties, they should also take care not to render religious exercises burdensome to young persons, by extending them to an immoderate length; or expecting too much from children.

“ Proper

* See page 217, Note (b).

† One means used by Mr. PHILIP HENRY, to impress the minds of his children with an early sense of religion was this—he taught and explained to them such a form of words as the following; which each of them solemnly repeated every Lord’s day in the evening after they were catechised,—“ I take God the Father to be my chief good and highest end—I take the Son of God to be my Prince and Savior—I take the Holy-Ghost to be my Sanctifier, Teacher, Guide, and Comforter—I take the word of God to be the rule of my conduct, &c.—And I devote unto the Lord all I am, and all I have, &c.”—When they had done, he put his *Amen* to it; and sometimes added—*so say, and so do, and you are made for ever*.—As they grew up, he made them all write it over with their own hands, telling them he would keep it by him, and produce it as a testimony against them, if they should afterwards depart from God.

“ Proper allowances are to be made for their tender age, &c. that they may be taught, and trained up as they are able to bear it.” Luke v. 33--35.—Neither should any thing parents wish to have them learn, be enjoined as a task, but rather proposed as an advantage, and as granting them a favor. (*q*) Therefore, tho’ you will think it your duty to teach your children to pray (as well as pray for them) you should never *force* them to the service. On the contrary, aim to make it a matter of their free choice, by representing to them in a few plain and affectionate words, “ what an high honor and privilege it “ is, for creatures so mean, unworthy, and necessi- “ tous, to be permitted to speak to the great God, “ who has signified, that he will hear and answer, “ nay that he takes pleasure in those, who delight to “ call upon him; for he is an infinitely good Being, “ from whom they receive all they *do*, or *can* enjoy.” Such like familiar reasonings may be used by parents, as a mean to dispose children willingly to go to a place of public worship.—Whilst you are far from giving way to their foolish tempers, and gratifying every craving appetite, (*r*) deny them not any indulgence that is consistent with their real interest; and thus lead them readily to obey you, by a winning treatment. Always shew yourselves pleased when they do well, and as uniformly manifest marks of displeasure on their acting amiss. (*s*)——

If

(*q*) Dr. COTTON MATHER (if I remember right) used to make the good behavior of his children, the condition of his hearing them *read*, or *teaching* them any thing; and they were brought to consider his refusing to instruct them, &c. as a mark of high displeasure.

(*r*) Those parents are very much to be blamed, who not only humor their childrens fancies, but also suffer them to obtain their desires by clamor, and crying; which is often a striving for mastery, and an open declaration of their insolence and obstinacy.

(*s*) *Beating* children for their faults, and all other sorts of slavish and corporal punishments, are rarely to be applied, and that only in cases of extremity; because tho’ the child submits, whilst the

If mild reproofs are disregarded, or the fault be very bad (*t*) the rod of correction must not be spared. Prov. xix. 18. But then chastise them with calmness, and let them see that you consider it as a most disagreeable business; aim to convince them of the evil of their conduct, and tell them that duty to God, and a view to their good, oblige to this severity. 'Tis also a point of the utmost importance, that you do not suffer them to associate with any children from whom they might learn vain and profane language, or any ill habit. And with respect
to

the fear of the rod hangs over him; yet when that is removed, and he can promise himself impunity, he gives the greater scope to his natural inclination: Or should this severity work a cure upon the present unruly distemper, it is frequently bringing in the room of it, a worse disease, by breaking the spirits. On the other hand, promising children money, fine clothes, or something to please their appetites, as a reward for their obedience, &c. is a method by no means to be approved, as it teaches them luxury, pride, or covetousness.—*The rewards and punishments* whereby we should keep children in order, are of a different kind, viz. *esteem* and *disgrace*.—The Father should caress and commend them when they do well, and shew a cold and neglectful countenance to them, upon doing ill; and let this be accompanied by a like carriage of the mother, servants, and all who are about them. Mr. LOCKE on Education.

(*t*) *Lying and dishonesty* are (of course) to be reckoned among the more heinous faults, and are by no means to be slightly noticed.—The first time the child is found in a lye (says the above writer) it should indeed be rather wondered at as a monstrous thing in him, than reprov'd as an ordinary fault. If that keeps him not from repeating it, the next time he must be sharply rebuked, and for a while after his parents and the whole family should carry themselves exceedingly shy towards him.—And if this work not the cure, you must come to blows.—Let them know, that *twenty* faults are sooner to be forgiven, than even the straining of truth to cover *any one* by an excuse.—The same Author has justly remark'd, that parents should prevent children as much as they can, from hearing or reading frightful stories: And they should be also careful, not to threaten to put them into some dark place, with a view to awe them into subjection; for then, you may expect that terrifying ideas will follow them, whenever they are alone; yea such strong impressions may be made upon their minds, that they may be afraid of their very shadows and darkness all their lives after.

to yourselves, *do* or *say* nothing which you would not have them imitate.—How cutting to a parent, to hear such words from a child as one formerly address'd to his father, “If I have done evil, I learnt it of you.” Be solicitous then, to add to instruction the force of an upright example. O let them learn from your lives, and not merely from your lips, how they ought to walk and to please God! Psalm ci. 2.—By the way shew the same affection to every child (if the carriage be the same) otherwise you take the very method to promote envying amongst them.—When you propose to send them abroad to school, seek for a master that is not only a man of abilities, but likewise of a serious and engaging disposition, and who at the same time maintains his authority amongst his pupils.—As soon as they are arriv'd at a proper age to be taught a trade(*u*) do what you are able to provide for them some useful, and suitable(*w*) calling or profession; and if you regard their immortal welfare place them in a sober family. Since this is a thing of unspeakable moment, let me beseech you not to be induced by any worldly consideration whatever, to fix your children in a family destitute of religion.—When
you

(*u*) “It is much to be wished that the children of wealthy parents were also obliged to learn some manual trade (for the employment of their leisure time) as gardening, &c. hereby the mischievous consequences of idleness would be prevented; health promoted; and habits of diligence and self-denial early contracted: So that if by an adverse Providence they should be reduced to low circumstances (having been somewhat used to labor, and endure hardness) they are not likely to become the burthens of society, or to do any wicked or mean things to support themselves.—Children delicately brought up are generally ruined for both worlds.”—See Mr. ORTON's sermons, Vol. I. page 77. LOCKE on Education, p. 306, &c. and p. 170 of this Treatise.

(*w*) Such an employment as appears to be most adapted to the natural genius of a child,—For parents (says a late writer) to direct a strong inclination in a child, to any kind of study, or trade, from its natural course, is seldom, if ever attended with any good in the end; but very often brings misery and utter ruin.

you thus part, yet still follow them with your counsels and prayers, Job. i. 5.

To parents who go on from day to day in the neglect of such advice as the preceding, we have reason to say---tremble to think of your children being lost for ever, and their blood being requir'd at your hands.

To parents who endeavor to train up their children in wisdom's ways.---Should you not succeed according to your wishes, you will however have the testimony of conscience to be your support under family troubles: But if your pious attempts be crown'd with success (which you have reason to expect, Prov. xxii. 6,) and you and your offspring walk together in the fear of God, besides the comfort it will afford you, whilst passing through this vale of tears, what pleasing reflection will it yield in your dying moments---what a joyful meeting will you have at the right hand of the glorious Judge, and how will it add to your happiness thro' endless ages,

TO CHILDREN.

YE children, the lambs of the flock, let me acquaint you, that Jesus the great and good Shepherd sees and regards you: For when he was upon Earth young children were brought to him, that he should touch them; and he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them, Mark x. 13, 16. 'Tis not too soon then for you to learn to know your heavenly Father and compassionate Redeemer.----Since to know, love, and serve God and Christ, is the way for you to be happy for ever, you should gladly hearken to such as are ready to instruct you in your catechisms, and be also willing to go to the House of God on Sabbath days, and try to remember something of what the minister says.—Daily beg your parents to assist you in lifting up your infant hands in prayer and praises, Matt. xxi. 15, and obey them in all things, Colos. iii. 20.---

Play not with those children who use bad words; never tell a lye, or take that which belongs to another; be loving and kind to all around you.—O my tender charge, it is *my heart's desire and prayer to God for you*, that you may be *a seed to serve him, and be accounted to the Lord for a generation.*

TO YOUTH.

ATTEND (I beseech you) to the plain advice of one, who would fain be the instrument of promoting your best interest.—Have you been devoted to God by your parents in baptism? Be concerned to answer the end of that dedication. To effect this design, you must be sensible how necessary it is to take good heed in the choice of your companions: Evil company (*) is the great bane of youth,—“ the means of wearing out all serious impressions, exposes to numerous temptations to sin and folly; puts out of the way of reformation; leads to many temporal disasters (blasting the good name, wasting the substance, impairing the health, and shortening the days) and at last sinks the soul into a state of horror and despair:” You may therefore perceive, with how much reason the inspired writer addresses that earnest dissuasive to youth.----*Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men: Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.* “ As if he should have said, shun the

(*) “ By *evil company* we mean, not only persons of the most abandoned characters, but those too who manifest a neglect of religion, tho’ free from gross and scandalous immoralities.—When we persuade you to avoid such company, you will scarce imagine, that we are advising you to have nothing to do with them in the common affairs of life, and the business of your calling, since then as the Apostle expresses it you *must needs go out of the world.* Nor will you suppose that we are leading you to an omission of any offices of humanity, or civility to them: Least of all can it be thought that we would hinder you from applying yourselves to them by serious admonitions: The folly we would caution you against is, chusing irreligious persons for your intimate friends, and delighting to spend your vacant hours in vain conversation with them.” DODDRIGE.

the very place where such unhappy creatures assemble, as you would, if it were infected with the most malignant and dangerous disease: And if you have unwarily taken any steps towards it, stop short, and direct your course another way." Yes be *a companion of them that fear the Lord, and of them that keep his precepts.* Psal. cxix. 63. When you cannot enjoy their society, let useful books be your companions.---As you advance in years, aim to increase in divine knowledge; to this purpose, let me entreat you to pay due attention to the directions given in this treatise, for hearing the word preached to edification. † Not only hear and read the Gospel, &c. for your improvement in knowledge, but reflect upon your own concern in its all important contents, and be not easy till by the aids of the Spirit, you have felt it to come in power, even in such power, that you can affirm with St. Paul, *That 'tis a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, the chief of sinners*—with such power as to melt your hearts into a godly sorrow for sin; as to beget the same mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus; and as to influence you to walk in that holy and profitable manner, in which he also walked, who went about doing good.——The advantages of early piety are many, and great.---“ It will yield you “ that true and durable delight which a flattering “ world is unable to give, Prov. iii. 17. Your ex- “ ample peculiarly tends to rouse the old, and ani- “ mate the young to seek the things that are above, “ 1 Tim. iv. 12. Your pious friends will rejoice, “ 3d Epist. of John verse 4. God will behold you “ with special approbation, Jer. ii. 2: Should you “ become the heads of families, you will have the “ best qualifications for that momentous station, Psal. “ lxxviii. 4, 6. If you are spared to advanced life, “ you are like to be bright ornaments to religion, “ 1 Kings xviii. 3, 12. And great will be your re- “ ward

† See page 212, &c,

“ward in the kingdom of Heaven. 1 Cor. xv. 58.” On the contrary, if you delay the work of salvation to some distant period, “you will not only loose a considerable portion of solid pleasure, but likewise the habits of sin will increase their strength, the cares of the world press upon you, and the influences of the Spirit may be with-held more than heretofore, and thus your conversion become more difficult. Jer. xiii. 23. 1 Cor. vii. 35. Philip. ii. 12, 13. Or perhaps death may make you an awful visit in the midst of your days, cut off your purposes, and not leave a glimpse of hope for an eternity to come.”—Let me therefore importunately exhort you, my dear young friends, to devote the morning of your days, that golden season to the service of your God and Redeemer. Begin the solemn transaction in secret, and then approach the table of the Lord, and publicly declare yourselves to be the disciples of Christ, and that you glory in his cross. In this solemn, yet pleasant manner, do you *remember your Creator and Savior in the days of your youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when you shall say, you have no pleasure in them.*

TO ADULTS WHO ARE CANDIDATES, &c.

SHOULD any arrived to years of maturity (not baptized in their infancy be desirous of christian baptism) happen to read these pages,—I would beg leave to offer a few things to the serious attention of such.—Please to consider e. g. that as baptism is a profession of your faith in Jesus, or that you believe him to be the *Messiah* promised in the Old Testament, *the Son of God*, and the appointed *Savior of the world*.—I say, as you profess to believe those important points, it is without doubt necessary, that you as well as christian parents should be acquainted with the arguments for them: Therefore I humbly recommend to you, closely to reflect on what has been advanced above to prove *the divine mission of Christ*,

Christ, and the truth and inspiration of the Scriptures. (y) What I now inculcate, you may see exemplified in the case of the Eunuch. Acts viii. 32—38.

Those who are about to enter themselves into the christian church by the ordinance of baptism, ought also to remember, that the baptism of water is only *the sign* (z) and the baptism of the Spirit *the thing signified*, and on which salvation depends. Therefore, when our Lord says, *Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*† Grotius and others apprehend *the water* of the Spirit to be here meant.—As if he had said, *Except a man be born of the water of the Spirit, or spiritual water, &c.*—the regenerating influences of the holy Spirit in Scripture being often compared to water.*

When you are approaching this solemn ordinance, you are moreover to bear in mind, that you hereby profess “to yield yourselves unto God, (thro’ Jesus “the Mediator, with an humble dependance on the “aids of the Spirit, Matt. xxviii. 19. Ephes. ii. 18.) “and

(y) It has been observed, that faith cannot be founded on the authority of the Old and New Testament, till we are persuaded and convinced of that authority; and yet how little is this point attended to by numbers of professing christians.—“He who has but the least occasion to acquaint himself (says “Mr. JER. JONES) with the religious state of mankind, cannot “but with surprizing concern have remark’d, how slender the “principles are upon which men receive the Scriptures, as the “word of God. The truth is (tho’ a very melancholy one) “that many persons commence religious at first, they don’t know “why, and so with a blind zeal persist in a religion, which is “they don’t know what; by the force of custom, &c. they receive the Scriptures as the word of God, without making any “serious enquiries after those solid reasons, which satisfactorily prove their divine authority, &c.”—See also what has “been said p. 228, Note (f).

(z) Tho’ the baptism of water be only a sign, it appears not to have been superseded by the baptism of the spirit, for St. Peter expressly ordered those very persons to be baptized with water, who had received the Holy Ghost already. Acts x. 44, 48.

† John iii. 5. * Chap. vii. 37—40.

“ and to believe the declarations of the Gospel of Christ, Acts xvi. 31---35, you testify your desire after the exceeding blessings of the covenant of grace, Acts ii. 41, promise to forsake all your sins, Mark i. 4, and to serve God in purity and righteousness, Romans vi. 4.”

Having devoted yourselves to God in baptism, keep at the utmost distance from the defilements of sin; and be perfecting holiness; knowing this, that if you are *unholy* your baptism can profit you nothing. * For as St. Peter observes, *the baptism that saves is not the putting away the filth of the flesh by the use of water, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.* (a) 1 Epist. iii. 21.

Let me therefore exhort you (my dear friends) to employ your hearts and heads, your hands and tongues, and every power ‘in the most honorable manner for God, and the most useful for the good of men.’-----Thus approve yourselves such as are *baptized with the Holy Ghost—the members of Christ’s body—the sons and daughters of the most High.*

A PRAYER to be used by parents before a child’s baptism.

GREAT GOD! thou art our rightful Owner, sovereign Ruler, and bountiful Benefactor. We are fallen, guilty and impure creatures; exceedingly
ly

* “ Therefore when any converted to christianity, are spoken of as *being saved by being baptiz’d*, it does not signify, that baptism had in itself something efficacious to eternal salvation, but their being brought into the most certain way of salvation; and their being brought out of the darkness of their heathen state, to the light and knowledge of that Gospel, which teaches us what we must do to be saved.”

(a) It is well known (says Doctor Doddridge) that the Jews laid a great stress upon their lustrations. The Apostle therefore very properly cautions them against such foolish dependencies. A courageous readiness in the performance of their whole duty, was absolutely necessary in order to maintain that good conscience, to which in their baptism they solemnly engaged themselves!

ly unworthy of, and unfit for communion with thee. ---But, adored be the riches of thy grace! thou hast appointed a Mediator, thro' whom offending creatures may come unto God; and hast also sent down the holy Spirit, to sanctify our souls, and render them meet for the divine presence.---Forbid it Lord, that we should treat with contempt that excellent provision thou hast made for our recovery to a state of purity and happiness.---We would now give up ourselves unto God, thro' the blessed Redeemer, and by the help of the sacred Spirit: Be pleased to receive us, and be a Father unto us, and may we be thine obedient children. We would also attempt (condescending Jehovah!) to devote our offspring unto thee. O that we may do it in sincerity, with humility, solemnity, and thankfulness. In whatever we engage (agrecable to thy mind and will) may we be graciously accepted, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom *is given all power in Heaven and in Earth.* Amen, and Amen.

A PRAYER for the use of parents after a child's baptism.

O Thou Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good gift, and every perfect gift, with whom is no variableness, nor the least shadow of a change.----We offer up our thanksgivings to thee, for that kind notice which is taken of children in the glorious Gospel. O that thou wouldest be pleased to look with a most favorable eye towards our dear child, who has been lately presented unto thee.----Whatsoever guilt or pollution may cleave to our offspring, in consequence of its relation to the *first Adam*, may all be removed by the blood of Christ, and the baptism of the holy Spirit.---If infinite wisdom see it for the best, may the child be long spared. O that it may prove a comfort indeed to us, the parents; an instrument of promoting the happiness of multitudes,

titudes, and eminently glorify thee both living and dying.—[*Pour thy Spirit upon all our seed, thy blessing upon our offspring that they may spring up as willows by the water courses.*]

With respect to us parents, we pray that the solemn profession of christianity we have been making, and the voluntary engagements under which we have laid ourselves, may stir us up to act a part becoming the christian name and character. Assist us in teaching thy commandments diligently unto our children; abundantly succeed us in the discharge of the various duties we owe to all, who are committed to our care: and help us at all times to *behave ourselves wisely, and to walk within our house with perfect hearts.* And, grant most gracious God, that we, and every branch of our family, may hereafter *be accounted worthy to stand before the judge, and partake of the honors, triumph, and joys of that day.*—*Incline thine ear, O our God, and hear; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies, in Jesus Christ; who is the image of the invisible God: Of thee, and thro' thee, and to thee are all things; to whom be glory for ever.* Amen.

A PRAYER for an Adult before Baptism.

[*This may be used by the serious Christian at any other time, as a solemn form of self-dedication, or covenant with God.*]

O Thou who art unchangeably holy and blessed, and before whom all things are naked and open. Deeply affect my mind with this truth, that thou art a present tho' unseen witness of the solemn affair in which I now engage.—I am *taking hold of thy strength,* that I may make peace with thee, and would fain embrace thy covenant, which is *well ordered in all things and sure.*—I renounce the glories and vanities of the world; would regard them no more as my chief good; and desire to part with every iniquity.—
I chuse

I chuse *the Father of mercies for my Father, and my highest and everlasting happiness.*—I accept of *the Son of God as mine all-sufficient Savior.* To his holy word I would give an attentive ear; to his sufferings, death, and intercession I thankfully look, as the appointed way in which to obtain forgiveness and reconciliation with the offended Jehovah; and this Jesus, I wish to obey as Head over all things to the church.—I also take *the eternal Spirit for my Sanctifier, and Comforter:* His influence I would earnestly seek and yield to his motions on my heart, by avoiding *the evil* he discovers to me, and doing *the good* he sets before me.—Holy Majesty of Heaven, I do now devote to thee *all that I am, and all that I possess,* beseeching thee not to refuse this mean offering, for tho' it be infinitely unworthy of thine acceptance, 'tis the best I am able to present thee! O do thou from henceforth number me among thy *peculiar people,* cleanse me from my sins in the blood of Christ, and let thy blessed Spirit sanctify my impure nature, and impart to me *that peace of God, which passeth all understanding;* and carry on his divine work till it be brought to a state of perfection.

[When I shall dedicate myself to thee in a public manner, may it be done with profound reverence, fulness of consent, and great gladness of heart; and do thou smile on *the living sacrifice,* and *lift up the light of thy countenance upon me.*]

O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, thro' Jesus *the holy and true.*—To whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.

A PRAYER for an Adult after baptism,—or after the christian's first approach to the table of the Lord.

O Thou who lookest down from the exaltations of thy Majesty, *and who ridest upon the Heavens in thine excellency.*—Fury is not in thee: Thy name, O God, thy chosen name is love; 'tis the beginning

and end of all thy works, the glorious end thou hadst from all eternity in view.---*There is no God like thee who keepest covenant and mercy, with thy faithful servants.*—I recollect it with joy, that I have renounced all former Lords, and avouched thee the Lord to be my God before many witnesses. I have consecrated to thee, the faculties of my mind, the members of my body, my worldly possessions, and my influence over others, to be used for thy glory. As I am a weak creature let the power of the most High be present to help me in the hour of temptation. *O put thy fear in my heart that I may not depart from thee;* that neither the world with all its flatteries, nor death or Hell with all their terrors may prevail upon me to break my sacred vows.---In the name of the Lord of Hosts may I be daily advancing towards the celestial state, *making my boast in the Lord, rejoicing in thy salvation,* and bringing forth abundance of spiritual fruit, to the divine praise, and the benefit of mankind. In due season, may I be joined *to the general assembly of the first born whose names are written in Heaven.*

Since I am bound by my religious engagements to seek the prosperity of Zion—I pray, that *thy blessing may be on all thy people.* And may great additions be made to thy churches in all places.—*O teach transgressors thy way, and may sinners be converted unto thee.* And grant I beseech thee that all the professors of christianity, may grow in knowledge, faith, love, and holiness. *Hearken O Lord to the supplications of thine unworthy servant, make me perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle me, for the sake of thy well-beloved Son, and my Savior. To God be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

ON THE LORD'S SUPPER. (a)

THE great Father of all, who knows how much we are touched with sensible things, has wisely ordered it, that we should have some considerable points of religion held forth to our senses, in those ordinances of the Gospel, *Baptism and the Lord's Supper*: And it must be own'd, that *these* are such sensible memorials of God's grace, and our duty, as help the meditating faculties of the soul.

THE NATURE OF THE ORDINANCE.

It consists in receiving *bread*, which the minister has broken and blessed, (b) and eating it in remembrance (c) of the body of Christ broken on the cross for us; and in taking *wine* poured out by the minister into the cup, and drinking it in remembrance of the blood of Jesus which was shed for our sins,
Matt.

(a) This ordinance is stiled in Scripture *the Lord's Supper*, 1 Cor. xi. 20, because it was appointed by Christ our Lord and Master, and established at the close of the *paschal supper*: Yet tho' it was first instituted in the evening it may with propriety amongst us be administered at noon, since *dinner time* being our chief meal answers to *the supper* the chief meal among the Jews.—The primitive christians often communicated in the morning before day, which shews they did not lay any great stress upon the time.—DODDRIDGE'S Lect. p. 528.

(b) “ That may in the language of scripture be said *to be blessed* which is in a solemn manner set apart from a common to a sacred use, Gen. ii. 3. And a person may be said *to bless it*, who solemnly prays that God may attend the use of it with such influences from above, as may make it the occasion of edification to the soul.”

(c) As the end for which our Lord ordained this duty was *the remembrance of himself*, from hence, (it has been observ'd) the unlearned christian is furnish'd with a short and plain argument to prove the absurdity and falsehood of the popish doctrine of *transubstantiation*, (or that the bread and wine are actually changed into the body and blood of Christ, upon the priest's having pronounced those words over the elements, *this is my body*.)—“ The doing any act in *remembrance* of a person implies his *bodily absence*, and if he is *bodily present*, we can never be said to perform that action in order to *remember him*.”

Matt. xxvi. 26--28.—*This is my body which is given, Luke xxii. 19, or broken for you, 1 Cor. xi. 24.* As much as to say, *this broken bread represents my body to be broken on the cross for your sakes.*—Our Lord speaks of the event, as if already past to denote its certainty, (*d*) &c.—*And he took the cup (e)* i. e. a cup with wine in it—*saying this is my blood of the New Testament or New Covenant, viz. this is the representation of my blood, whereby the New Covenant of God with men is confirmed.* 'Tis to be considered as a token, that the Father will bestow spiritual blessings, particularly the forgiveness of sin (thro' Christ Jesus) on all worthy receivers.

The *Lord's supper* then, is an ordinance appointed to preserve *the memory* of Christ, 1 Cor. xi. 24, and more especially of his sufferings and death; those intense sufferings he underwent in the garden of Gethsemane, and that disgraceful, exceedingly painful, and lingering death of the cross (*f*) he so willingly endured, Luke xii. 50. PRE-

(*d*) It is very common in Scripture, to speak of what should *certainly* and *quickly* be, as if it was *already done*, John xvii. 4. Ephes. ii. 5, 6. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xviii. 2.

(*e*) The laity among the papists are not permitted to drink of the sacramental wine, tho' Christ expressly commands that his disciples should *all* drink of it: The reason for their treating the people thus, is because the popish church saith that the bread contains the whole body of Christ, a notion grounded on the above-mentioned foolish and monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation.

(*f*) *Crucifixion* was a punishment which caused such *extremity* of torture, that it was a custom to give the malefactor *a mixture* to stupify him. This cup was offered to Christ, but he refused it, being determin'd (for wise reasons) to bear the full force of his pains, Mark xv. 23. As to the *ignominy* of this kind of punishment, the Romans held it so particularly disgraceful, that they usually inflicted it on none but *slaves*, or *the worst* of criminals. Accordingly, we read Heb. xii. 2. of the *shame* of the cross. With respect to *the long continuance* of the intolerable pains—We find in the account given of our Lord's death, that his sufferings on the cross lasted the space of six hours, Mark xv. 25, 34.—Besides all this, there were *certain circumstances* attending the sufferings of Christ, which greatly aggravated them, Mat. xxvi. 56. Chap. 27, 39--47. See WHITTY on the Lord's supper.

PREPARATION FOR IT.

Let a man examine himself, &c. 1 Cor. xi. 28. We should go to the sacred table with *suitable dispositions*, and our minds should be stored with *proper materials* for meditation.

For example, we ought to approach the Lord's supper WITH FAITH—faith in God, in a future state, Heb. xi. 6, and in Jesus Christ, John xiv. 1.—*True faith in God*, is such a persuasion of his Being and perfections, and the relations in which he stands to us, as our Creator, Preserver, bountiful Benefactor, rightful Sovereign, and the gracious Restorer of mankind, as leads us to reverence his power, and implore its protection; to admire his wisdom, and seek its guidance; to esteem and celebrate his goodness and compassion; heartily to obey his righteous commands; and patiently submit to the afflictive dispensations of his Providence—being designed for our advantage.——See, how faith wrought in Abraham, the renown'd pattern of believers, James ii. 21, 22, compared with Gen. xxii. 1, 2, 3.——*Faith in things future*, is such a deep conviction of their *certainty* and *high importance*, that they affect the mind in a great degree, as if they were present: So that the christian prefers Heaven to Earth, Colos. iii. 2, and his chief care is to secure an interest in celestial treasures, John vi. 27. Agreeable hereto, he prays and watches against every thing that would be his hindrance in this respect, and resolves to pursue those holy paths that conduct to the inheritance of the saints in light, tho' he should hereby expose himself to reproach, worldly losses, pain and tribulation.—Mark the triumphs of faith in the ancient worthies. Heb. xi. 33—40.—*Faith in Jesus Christ* †
is

† For the sake of christians of lower abilities, we may remark, that *as faith in Christ* in the more extensive signification of the term means a *belief* of the whole doctrine of the Gospel,—now
seeing

is an acknowledging and sincerely receiving him under every character, in which he is represented to us in divine revelation. Particularly, we may consider it as consisting in an affectionate regard to him as our High Priest; who having once offered himself a sacrifice for sin, passed into the Heavens, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us; Heb. iv. 14---16, as consisting also in a subjection of heart and life to the laws† of his spiritual kingdom, Ephes. v. 24.——For *the attainment and increase* of the faith briefly described, we are attentively to observe the evidence offered for such a faith. Rom. x. 17. We should meditate on such passages of Scripture as these. Heb. iii. 4.*—*In my Father's house are many mansions---I go to prepare a place for you,* John xiv. 2. 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, 4. Rev.

seeing in this Gospel, Jesus hath revealed the Father to us, in the honors of his majesty, and in the brightest glories of his grace, Joh. i. 18. and life and immortality are here brought to light by him, 2 Tim. i. 10, consequently, *faith in Christ* includes each of these.—Of course when we are commanded to *believe in the Lord Jesus*, we are in effect also commanded to *believe in God the Father, and in future realities.*

† Thus it appears with abundant evidence that *saving faith* is such an assent to the truth of the above infinitely weighty points, as purifies the heart from the defilements of iniquity, Acts xv. 9, and renders the life and conversation holy, Gal. v. 6. James ii. 18.——Faith (as a judicious writer expresses it) is the spring, duties the streams that flow from it: Or faith is the root, good works the branches: Or faith is the inward principle of a divine life, the christian graces and virtues are the signs of a divine life. Suitable to these views of faith *the Gospel* we are called upon to believe, Mark i. 15, furnishes us with unspeakably momentous and engaging motives to obedience; and is said to be made known to all nations for the obedience of faith, Rom. xvi. 26. Should a person therefore stile himself a *true believer*, whilst he lives in allowed sin; his pretensions would be utterly vain. Whatever “boast he might make of inward joys,” his faith in the language of Scripture is a *dead faith*, James ii. 26, a faith that leaves him in a state of condemnation. *He that believeth not on the Son*, or (as it is in the original) *he that is disobedient to the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him*, John iii. 36.

* See page 87.

Rev. xxi. 2, &c.---*He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.* Heb. vii. 25. *He became the Author of eternal salvation to all that obey him.* Chap. v. 9. We are to remember, that these are the declarations of Jesus the *true One*,§ and of his Apostles, who established the truth of their doctrine by miracles.---The grace of faith is moreover to be sought by prayer. Ephes. ii. 8.---“O God faith is thy gift, be pleased to bestow that precious gift on me.” Or the christian’s request may be “Lord increase my faith.”

WITH REPENTANCE, Matt. ix. 3.---The word *repentance* signifies “an inward change of the state and temper of the mind.” The true penitent approves of the law of God, as holy, just and good. He dreads the divine displeasure far more than the frowns of the most powerful creature, and is therefore earnestly desirous of obtaining forgiveness and reconciliation with God through the Mediator. Ingenuous grief works in his heart, because he has sinned against a Being of so great loving-kindness. He is filled with shame and confusion before God, under a sense of his utter unworthiness; hates sin as the great comprehensive evil, and detests his former self for hearkening unto the voice of temptation: And determines by the help of God’s grace to root out of his heart that bitter thing. Rom. vii. 12. Ezra ix. 6. 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10, 11.---Genuine repentance extends also to the life: Each evil way is forsaken, and the charming fruits of righteousness beautify the outer man, Isaiah i. 16, 17. Matt. iii. 8.---As a *means* to produce this repentance, we are closely to view the manifold very malignant effects of sin: View it introducing disorder and corruption, trouble and pain into our nature; unfitting us for the noble and delightful employ of converse with God here, and the bliss of Heaven hereafter; and exposing us to future lasting miseries: View it as an affront to the divine Majesty, infinitely hateful to his holiness, ingratitude

§ See page, 230, &c.

gratitude to God's goodness, a despising of his astonishing mercy in Christ Jesus, and a striving against the benign influences of the sacred Spirit.---Let us likewise give all possible attention to the following moving expressions, and powerful motives to repentance. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 9. Rom. ii. 4. Chap. vi. 10, 11, 21. Acts xvii. 31. Chap. iii. 19. To these reflections let prayer be added. "Enable me O Lord to repent of sin with that repentance which is unto life." Or, "Assist me in offering unto thee the sacrifice of a broken heart and contrite spirit."

WITH LOVE TO GOD, Matt. xxii. 37, 38.---This sublime affection disposes a person to engage in the duties of religion with pleasure; Psal. lxxiii. 28, and to value the divine favor above all things, Psal. iv. 6. Whilst the christian is delighted with the infinite beauties of God, he feels a solemn awe of the divine glories. Heb. xii. 28. It keeps him back from deliberately pursuing any evil course, or from proceeding in the wilful neglect of an evident command, † Psal. xcvi. 10. 1 John v. 2. In proportion as the love of God prevails in the heart, there will be a more ready compliance with the duties of self-denial, and heavy afflictions will be borne with increased resignation. Rom. v. 1--6.-----To *kindle this sacred love in our breast*, we are seriously to consider, that God is supremely great and amiable, the Source of life, and the Giver of all the happiness that is enjoyed throughout the universe. Particularly, we should think of the pleasing displays of his goodness, and the riches of his grace, wherein he has abounded towards us in all his wisdom and
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† A person may imagine, that he loves God, because he approves of his *goodness and mercy*—"whereas true love to God respects not only his *benewolence and grace*, but also his *purity and righteousness*; and forasmuch as *the law* of God is a *transcript* of his holiness, therefore those who love God as they ought, love his *law*." Psalm cxix. ver. 97.

prudence. Our thoughts should especially dwell on the following parts of holy writ.—*God so loved the world, &c.* John iii. 16.—*God commendeth his love towards us, &c.* Rom. v. 8. 1 John iv. 9, 10.—Then attempt to lift up the soul and say, ‘The Lord direct my heart into the love of God.’

WITH LOVE TO THE BLESSED REDEEMER, 1 Pet. i. 8.—*Such love* as excites us to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts: Gal. v. 24, and willingly to do the things which he has taught us in his word, John xiv. 21.—*To inspire us with love and gratitude to Jesus, the image of the invisible God*, let us muse on those divine declarations, *Tho’ he was rich yet for our sakes he became poor*, 2 Cor. viii. 9. *He gave his life a ransom for many*, Matt. xx. 28. *Unto him who hath loved us and washed us in his blood, &c.* Rev. i. 5, 6.—‘Pray for the holy Spirit to take of the things that are Christ’s, and so apply them, that Jesus may indeed be precious to the soul.’

AND WITH LOVE TO OUR FELLOW CREATURES, Matt. xxii. 39.—*That love* which consists in desiring and praying for their happiness, 1 Tim. ii. 1, warning them of danger; imparting to them friendly advice; administering kind and meek reproof, if a man be overtaken in a fault, Heb. iii. 12, 13. Gal. vi. 1, appearing on the behalf of those who are injured, whether in their reputation, persons, or property; Isai. i. 17. feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, comforting the feeble-minded, Matt. xxv. 35--41. 1 Thes. v. 14. In short, embracing every opportunity of doing good to others, in regard to things temporal and eternal, and *that* with a ready mind, Rom. xii. 8.—*Tho’ our love be due more especially to good men*, yet ’tis to be shewn towards all in general, even to enemies,* Gal. vi. 10. Mark xi. 25.—*To incline us to such love*, we ought to recollect, that we are the creatures of the same God,

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* See Section Xth, part the 2d, of a piece entitled, The Duty and Interest—by the Author.

made of one blood, Acts xvii. 26. that christians are connected by still more endearing bonds, Gal. iii. 28. that pure love is most strictly commanded in Scripture, John xiii. 34. Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 21, and strongly and charmingly enforced by the example of *God and Christ*, Matt. v. 45. Ephes. iv. 32. Colos. iii. 13. Heb. ii. 9, that the exercise of it affords pleasure of the noblest kind to the heart, and qualifies the christian (in disposition) for that celestial paradise which is the very element of love, Gal. v. 22. 1 Cor. xiii. 8. At the close say, ‘O help me to love my fellow christians with a pure heart fervently.’ ‘May I love all men, not only in word, but in deed and in truth.’ ‘Aid me to forgive from the heart every enemy, and to do good to them who hate me.’†

A VARIETY OF DEVOUT THOUGHTS, AND SHORT EJACULATIONS, TO EMPLOY OUR MINDS IN THE CLOSET, JUST BEFORE WE GO TO THE LORD’S SUPPER, AND ALSO AT THE SACRAMENTAL TABLE.—THESE ARE TAKEN FROM THE SEVERAL ENDS OF THE ORDINANCE.

† Tis very obvious from the above scriptural view, that *true faith, repentance, and love* will operate on the mind in such a manner, as to engage the christian to yield a sincere and willing obedience to each divine command.—The young christian will also perceive, that where one of these graces really exists (in the heart of a person who is brought to the knowledge of the Gospel) the rest will have an existence. The connection between them is necessary—*Faith* lays a foundation for *repentance*, or an ingenuous sorrow for sin, and a turning from it unto God. Heb. vi. 1. For if a sense of the common goodness of the Deity leads to repentance (as the Apostle remarks) much more does a firm belief of the mercy of God displayed through Christ Jesus, and extending not only to the forgiveness of sin, but even to the conferring of eternal life. Jude ver. 21. *Love* too is the effect of *faith*: Since the Gospel, or the word of faith (as we have seen) supplies us with the weightiest and most winning reasons for our exercising love to God, the Savior, and one another, *that love* which renders obedience peculiarly easy and pleasant 1 Tim. i. 5.—Beholding *faith* in this light accounts for the very honorable mention made of this grace, and the great stress laid upon it, in the oracles of truth. Habakkuk ii. 4. 2 Pet. i. 1. Mark xvi. 16. Acts xvi. 31.

NANCE SPECIFIED IN THE DIVINE WORD, AND THE NAMES GIVEN TO IT, WHICH WE HAVE BRIEFLY ILLUSTRATED.—WHAT SHALL BE OFFERED, MAY BE HELPFUL AT LEAST TO THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN (PARTICULARLY AT THE TIME OF RECEIVING †) IF THE COMMUNICANT ENDEAVORS BEFORE-HAND, TO LAY UP IN MEMORY SUCH OF THE MATERIALS, AS HE FINDS BEST ADAPTED TO HIS OWN STATE AND FRAME.

In this ordinance, we have a view of the death of Christ, as a sacrifice for sin. (a) Isaiah liii. 5. John i. 29. Rom. iii. 25. 2 Cor. v. 21. For he hath made him

† Some ministers during the distribution of the elements speak but little, that their fellow worshippers may pursue the course of their own meditations without interruption.

(a) Does sin render the creature liable to bodily pains, anguish of mind, everlasting banishment from the blissful presence of God, and the curse of the Almighty?—Jesus after a life of perfect obedience, endured the deepest distress of mind, Mark xiv. 34, excruciating pains of body; the withdrawal of the usual manifestations of his Father's smiles; and was made a curse, Matt. xxvii. 34--40. Gal. iii. 13. Now these sufferings of *one* so completely holy, and of such transcendent dignity, 1 Pet. ii. 22. Heb. i. 3, born with wonderful resignation, fervor of zeal for his Father's glory, and glowing love and compassion towards mankind, merited for himself the highest mediatorial honors and felicity, and were likewise sufficiently efficacious to make way for the display of the abundant mercy and favor of God to penitent sinners, in consistence with the harmony of the divine attributes, and the honor of God's government, Heb. xii. 2. Rom. vi. 23. Therefore the death of Christ may be termed a proper sacrifice for sin, as the end of sacrifices was to remove the cause of the divine displeasure, and to restore friendship between God and man.—This scheme of salvation wherein the Son of God carried his obedience to that marvellous pitch, and with which the Father shewed himself so well pleased, as to bestow exceeding great glory and blessedness on the myriads of the human race for his sake, Rev. vii. 9, 14, 15. may be likewise designed as a means to promote the cause of goodness and piety among all orders of intelligent beings, who are acquainted with it. Indeed there may be many reasons in the divine counsels, for the appointment of the Redeemer to such labors and sufferings, *reasons* kept secret from us on this side the grave. So that we may say of the redemption of man, 'that it is a scheme of the most adorable love dispensed by the most

him to be sin, that is, a sin-offering *for us*, even that *Jesus who knew no sin*. Gal. iii. 13. Heb. ix. 26. Chap. x. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 24. Chap. iii. 18. *

O MY SOUL, now turn aside, and behold that great sight, God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself! Behold that wonderful object, a crucified Savior.—Did he who is stiled the Son of God, to denote his dignity, and the Lamb of God, to signify his innocence—did he die to take away the guilt of sin?—How great must that guilt be which required such an atonement!

‘ Let me learn from hence to abhor, and depart from sin, as that which is exceedingly sinful.’

‘ Lord, assist me to crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts.’

‘ Aid me in laying aside the sin that most easily besets me.’ ‘ Let

consummate wisdom.’—To convince us of the obligations we are under both to the Father and Son in regard to the established method of salvation, let it be considered, that the humiliation and extreme sufferings of Christ were voluntary, 1 Tim. ii. 6. that had he not interposed in such a manner on our behalf, it may have been inconsistent with the nature of the divine government thus to have saved and blest the posterity of Adam. Rom. viii. 3, 4. We are to reflect also, that God the Father may according to strict justice have left men to fall into that state of final ruin which is the natural consequence of sin: But instead of this he has provided a Savior for us, even his *own dear Son*, Gal. iv. 4. for whom he prepared a body, and communicated to him the Spirit above measure, to qualify him for the office of Mediator. Heb. x. 5. Isaiah lxi. 1. John iii. 34. The gift of eternal life is said to proceed from the Father, in and through the Son, 1 John iv. 9, and our Lord has declared that the Father loves him more especially because of his readiness to die for sinners, John x. 15, 17.—‘ O that every heart may be fired with the warmest admiration and gratitude towards God and the Lamb, for this glorious and ravishing display of love!’ Rev. vii. 9, 10.

* The following texts (like the above) if imprinted on the mind may be of excellent use to feed the flame of devotion on sacramental occasions—Psal. xl. 6, 9,—Isaiah xlix. 6—Mat. i. 21—John iii. 14, 18—Chap. vi. 33, 51, 53—Acts iv. 12—Rom. iv. 25—Chap. v. 8—2 Cor. v. 18, 19—Gal. ii. 20—Chap. iv. 4, 5—Colos. i. 19, 20—1 Timothy i. 15—Tit. ii. 11, 15—Heb. v. 8, 9—Chap. xii. 22, 23, 24—1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12—Rev. iii. 20.

‘ Let no iniquity have dominion over me.’

‘ As Christ died for sin, may I die unto sin.’

WERE the sufferings of my Savior so very bitter in the garden, and upon the cross?— This may serve to convince me of the certainty, and dreadfulnes of the future punishment of the ungodly. For if so much was done *to the green tree*, (to him that was righteous and innocent, and so like green wood not fit for fuel for the fire) *what shall be done to the dry*—to those who by impenitency in a sinful course, render themselves vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, as much fitted for it, as dry wood is to burn.

‘ Tremble therefore, O my soul, at the thought of continuing in sin, because grace abounds.’

‘ Hark! how awful as well as affectionate is the voice, that sounds from yonder cross—Flee from the wrath to come.’

HATH God indeed given up his Son to death, on the behalf of sinners? O what a lively hope of pardon does this afford the humble penitent, Rom. viii. 32.—Am I mourning for sin, do I strive, watch and pray against all iniquity, and yet ready to fear that my sins are *too many*, or *too aggravated* to be forgiven? Here is something to scatter my doubts, and assure me that God is ready to pardon, nay, that there is with him plenteous redemption.—Behold Jesus according to the wise and gracious proposal of the Father, putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself.—And now address thine offended, injured, heavenly Parent, in such language as this:

‘ I acknowledge my sin unto thee; verily I am guilty.’

‘ Father I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight.’

‘ I am ashamed, yea, even confounded because of my transgressions.’

‘ God be merciful to me a sinner.’

‘ Wash

‘ Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.’

‘ Having a great high Priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, I come boldly unto the throne of grace, that I may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.’

‘ Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.’

‘ I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions.—Sing, O Heavens; for the Lord hath done it.’

This sacred institution gives me also the best view of the bright and lovely example(b) of Christ. 1 Pet. ii. 21.

CONTEMPLATE, O my soul, the astonishing humility and obedience of Jesus; his glowing zeal for his Father’s glory, and ardent concern for the eternal welfare of men.—Who (says the Apostle) being in the form of God---took upon him the form of a servant---became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

‘ Let this mind be in me, which was in Christ Jesus.’

OBSERVE the eminent patience, and resignation of the Lord Jesus—’Twas in the hour of the powers of darkness(c)—when the horrors of the

(b) “ One powerful means of holiness, which the Gospel has prescribed, is, that we should propose to ourselves the best examples, and follow them: Heb. vi. 12. But because the examples of the best of men have many imperfections, we are therefore more particularly directed to the example of our divine Master, 1 Cor. xi. 1, who has given us a perfect living copy of all those graces and duties, that are pleasing to God and commanded in his word. We are therefore to peruse the history of his sacred life, and diligently observe his carriage, and closely apply it to ourselves.—Thus and thus my Savior acted, and thus he suffered.—To set the example of Christ before us, and imitate it, is, says one of the ancients, *to eat and drink of him*; for as meat and drink taken into the body nourish, so good examples admitted into the mind wonderfully strengthen it.—’Tis our Lord’s own injunction. John xiii. 15.”

(c) Dr. SCOTT and Mr. FLEMING both imagine that Christ now struggled with the spirits of darkness, who (says the former) exercised all their force and malice, to persecute and distract his innocent soul. Matt. xxvi. 37. Mark xiv. 33.

the cross were just before him, and the agony of his mind had brought upon him a bloody sweat—*then, then* it was the dear Redeemer uttered those memorable words---‘Father, not my will, but thine be done.’

‘Thus under the heaviest affliction, may I manifest entire submission, like my divine Master.’†

‘O that I might say in sincerity--It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good in his sight.’

MARK the great meekness of the Son of God towards his adversaries--towards his murderers†---When he was reviled, he reviled not again, 1 Pet. ii. 23. “Father forgive them, cries the dying Redeemer.”

‘So may I shew all meekness unto all men.’

‘I charge thee O my soul, by the most amiable example of thy Lord, to bless them that curse thee, to pray for them who despitefully use thee, always to overcome evil with good.’

LET me take a further survey of the glorious pattern of Jesus, the Author of mine high and heavenly calling---Behold him most fervent in prayer, Luke xxii. 44; cheerful in his obedience, John iv. 34; unwearied in doing good, Acts x. 38; heavenly-minded, John viii. 23; passing through a series of self-denial; Mark iii. 20, 21;* sympathizing, John xi. 35; speaking of the faults of his friends
in

† When the general of an army lies on the *same* hard ground, drinks of the *same* cold stream, carries the *same* weight of armour with the lowest centinel, can any of his soldiers repine at what they endure?---O let the poor afflicted christian (in order to hush every complaint, and to be contented with his lot) look at his divine Commander, raising poverty from contempt by assuming it for his own condition, and ennobling adversity by sharing it with us. BLAIR.

† Submission to God under great affliction, and forgiveness of our enemies are (as one observes) two of the most difficult duties; now these were admirably exemplified in the suffering Redeemer; we learn them *here* in a manner that we cannot learn them *elsewhere*.

* See page 176, note (r).

in the gentlest terms, Matt. xxvi. 41; and putting the most favorable construction on the conduct of his foes---“ They know not what they do.”

‘ May I resemble this best of friends, in all those admirable and charming virtues and graces, which shone forth in what he said, in what he did, and in what he suffered.’

‘ Blessed God! help me so to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.’

‘ Beholding in this ordinance, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, even his glorious holiness, may I be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord---by his assisting influences, and be a shining light in the world.’

The sufferings and death of Christ, here shewn forth, afford the strongest testimony to the truth of his doctrine. Accordingly he is called, Rev. i. 5, The faithful witness, or martyr.

THOUGH Jesus by his divine knowledge was perfectly acquainted with the treachery of Judas’s heart, and the agreement between him and the chief priests and scribes, (*d*) yet instead of concerting measures for his own preservation, he goes to the garden of Gethsemane as usual, where he might be easily found, and apprehended (*e*)---When Christ appeared before the high priest (being solemnly adjured to say upon oath who he was) he did not shun to make that true declaration, which he knew would expose him to death. (*f*) And when he was brought before Pontius Pilate, instead of using any kind of means to deliver himself, at the expence of truth---He tells him, that he was a King. (*g*) *This* (we may suppose) is that good confession, to which the

(*d*) John xiii. 21, 26, 27. (*e*) Chap. xviii. 2. (*f*) Matt. xxvi. 63—67.

(*g*) Com. John xviii. 37. Chap. xix. 12—23. and Luke xxiii. 4. from whence it appears, that our Lord’s boldly owning himself to be a King, was such a confession, as would induce the Roman governor to put him to death, tho’ he believed him to be an innocent person.

the Apostle Paul refers, 1 Tim vi. 13.---Thus Jesus voluntarily submitted to death, as a solemn and affecting proof, that he was such a one as he had before professed himself to be, and that his doctrine was from Heaven.

‘ When I reflect on these things, when I review my Redeemer’s death, the miraculous circumstances that attended it,† the glorious event that soon followed, Matt. xxviii. 1--7. I am naturally led to cry out---Jesus is indeed the Son of God, the King of Israel---that illustrious person, in whom it was foretold the Gentiles should trust.---On him, I rest mine immortal all---On that Jesus, who even in the depth of his humiliation appeared mighty to save: For observe the godlike manner in which he addressed the penitent malefactor,---To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. And now he is exalted to the right hand of power, who can doubt that he is able to save to the uttermost.---As his *ability* so his *willingness* is not to be questioned. Hear those words full of grace and truth, which he speaks from his celestial throne.---Whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life [*spiritual blessings*] freely.

JESUS, by readily laying down his life, rather than renounce his former pretensions, and doctrine, hath set a pattern to his people of adhering constantly to the truth, whatever it may cost them. Numbers of the first christians followed the footsteps of the Lamb of God, in this respect. And so indeed did those in Queen Mary’s days who yielded their bodies to the flames, rather than betray or forsake the truth.

‘ Here let me consider a little --is it not necessary that something of this same spirit of the martyrs should be in every sincere christian? Therefore, O my soul, if thou art at any time tempted (thro’ fear of man) to conceal what thou apprehendest to be the truth---as a means to overcome the temptation, look stedfastly towards those excellent persons---above all

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† See page 230.

look unto Jesus---God grant that this may be the deliberate language of my heart---I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus, sooner than deny the truth, than apostatize from his Gospel.'

By coming to the Lord's table, we publickly declare our fellowship with Christ, 1 Cor. x. 16; we converse with him by the exercise of faith, and express our ardent wishes to partake of those choice benefits, which Jesus hath procured, particularly by his great sufferings and death.

JESUS is spiritually present at this sacred feast---Behold the majesty and love that unite in him: His eyes are as a flaming fire; his countenance is as the Sun shineth in its strength; he holdeth in his right hand seven stars: And yet, he also appears like a lamb that has been slain---Be all attention, for he is about to speak---Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.

'To whom Lord should we go but unto thee, for thou hast the words of eternal life.'

HE speaks again---Eat O friends, and drink O beloved.

'Most gladly do we accept thy gracious invitation, O thou Son of the Blessed; for thy flesh received by faith is meat indeed to the soul, and thy blood is drink indeed.'

THE divine Redeemer speaketh yet once more---To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and lead him unto living fountains of water; he shall wear the brightness of the morning star, and sit with me on my throne.

'Dear and adorable Jesus! how exceedingly cheering are thy words, sweeter than honey or the honey comb---Thus encouraged, I will draw near and make known unto thee the fervent desires of my heart.'

'Glorious Immanuel in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, be thou mine Advocate with the Father, to introduce me into the divine favor.'

'Holy

‘ Holy One of God, make me pure, as thou art pure.’

‘ O thou in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge ! out of thy fulness, may I receive every needful supply.’

‘ Great Captain of salvation, when danger is nigh, may thy strength aid my weakness.’

‘ O thou who hast power to subdue all things to thyself, enable me to triumph over the last enemy death.’

‘ When absent from the body, may I be present with the Lord.’

‘ Blessed Jesus, who art the resurrection and the life, in thee may I have life, yea may I have it more abundantly, even everlasting life.’

Are we not to look upon the ordinance too as a pledge of Christ's second appearance, and by engaging therein, do we not openly avow our firm belief of that interesting event ? 1 Cor. xi. 26. (h)

BEHOLD he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him---he cometh in his own glory, and the glory of his Father, with his mighty angels, to reward every man according to his works, Rev. i. 7. Matt. xvi. 27. Chap. xxv. 31. 2 Thes. i. 7.

‘ The Lord grant that I might find mercy of the Lord in that day.’

NOW the Judge appears on a great white throne---the Heavens pass away with a tremendous noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat; the Earth and all things therein are burnt up.

‘ Seeing O my soul thou lookest for such things--be diligent that thou mayest be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.’

THIS exceedingly awful, is yet a most delightful subject to the thoughts of the watchful
 chris-

(h) The Apostle in the above text acquaints us not only with the *design*, but likewise the *perpetuity* of the ordinance, as appointed to be a standing memorial of the Redeemer's sufferings till the end of the world.

christian, the ardent lover of his Savior, the good and faithful servant, for he is well assured, that the Redeemer comes to be glorified in his saints.

‘Come Lord Jesus (cries such a christian) come quickly.’

’Tis a profession of brotherly love as those who keep the christian passover, eat of the same bread, (i) 1 Cor. x. 17.---“To have the same Redeemer, the same sacred symbols by which we declare our common zeal for his divine person, our common interest in him, and our common relation to one another---what an incentive and help must it be to christians mutually to study, and promote each other’s welfare.”

“O MY SOUL let thy most ardent wishes, thy most importunate prayers, thy most unwearied endeavors be for the peace and unity of the christian church. And resolve that no prejudice, no provocation shall ever alienate thine affections from any of those, who are fellow members of the same body with thee---Continually bear in mind thy Master’s new command, John xiii. 34, 35.”

‘Follow after charity or love.’

‘The Lord make me to abound in love towards fellow christians, and towards all men.’

“HOW great the happiness of brethren dwelling together in unity and love---The Psalmist compares it to such things as are most refreshing to the heart of man; to the fragrancy of the richest odours, and to the reviving influence of soft heavenly dews.” It is like the precious ointment poured on the head of Aaron; and like the dew of Hermon, even the dew that descendeth on the mountains of Zion, where the Lord commandeth the blessing even life for evermore.

‘Above all things then may we have fervent charity among ourselves.’

‘As

(i) Elzner has shewn, that eating together in a religious manner, hath been in almost all ancient nations a token of mutual friendship.

‘As Christ hath loved us, and laid down his life for us, so may we love one another---be ready to lay down our lives for the brethren.’ (k)

One name anciently applied to this holy institution, is the sacrament; which signifies an oath; for so the Romans call’d the oath that soldiers took to be true to their Generals, and our law uses the word sacrament in the same sense.—The communicant most solemnly devotes himself to the service of God and Christ; promises faithfully to maintain the warfare against sin (l) and satan.

‘I am thine, and thee will I serve.’

‘I avouch the Lord this day to be my God.’

‘Thou hast redeemed me with the precious blood of Christ; therefore I would glorify thee with my body, and with my spirit which are thine.’

‘I engage before God and man, to act the part of a good soldier of Jesus Christ.’

‘May the Spirit of grace help mine infirmities.’

‘O preserve me by thy mighty power, thro’ faith unto salvation.’

It has been also termed the Eucharist, which means the thanksgiving, the solemn thanksgiving: ’Tis so called, because Christ when he instituted this part of worship, gave thanks. Matt. xxvi. 27. And besides, in this ordinance, we commemorate the unspeakable mercy of God, in sending his Son into the world, even to die for sinners, 1 John iv. 10. and the matchless love of Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all, 1 Tim. ii. 6.---Now
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(k) That is, when the life and happiness of *many* is concerned, we ought to be willing to sacrifice *our own*. If *one* only were to be rescued on such terms, the argument would in a great measure fail, unless that *one* were of so great importance, that in dying for him, we died for many. DODDRIDGE.

(l) PLINY, an Heathen Governor, writing to Trajan the Emperor of Rome about the christians gives this account of them, which he had received from some apostates.—“That they were wont to assemble on a stated day, before it was light (being then under persecution) and to sing a hymn to Christ, as a God; binding themselves by a *sacrament*, not to commit any wickedness, and to make good their engagements, &c.”—Lib. 10. Epist. 97.

it is evident enough, that these are things which deserve the highest expressions of thankfulness and joy.

CONTEMPLATE O my soul the love of thine heavenly Father---How free, Ephes. iv. 32, how great, Chap. ii. 4--6. 1 John v. 11, and how extensive; John iii. 16. Rev. xxii. 17.

‘Blessed be God the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort for the gift of his Son, and for eternal life in and through him.’

‘Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither fruit be on the vines, &c. [the outward means of support be taken from me] yet, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.’

‘Thanks be to God who causeth me to triumph in Christ.’

‘To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.’

‘Bless the Lord ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word: Bless the Lord all his works, in all places of his dominion: Bless the Lord O my soul, from this time forth and for evermore.’

LET me also meditate on the grace of Christ Jesus---Behold him leaving the bosom of the Father, and descending to the lowest condition among men: Think of the painful labors he encountered, John xxi. 25, and the bitter pangs he felt for the sake of sinners.---O the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ, Ephes. iii. 18, 19.

‘Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.’

‘Whom having not seen I love.’

‘I count all things but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him.’

‘Worthy art thou, O Prince of peace, to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.’

‘Fain

‘ Fain would I join with the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, in saying, with a loud voice, worthy is the lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.’

O MY SOUL, remember that a grand end of this display of the love of God and Christ, was to make me more holy and useful, Tit. ii. 14. For love begets love, 1 John iv. 19. And where love is implanted in the heart, ’tis the chief spring of action; makes such a person most solicitous to please and serve the object beloved. Therefore, redeeming love (being the chief display of divine love) Rom. viii. 32, is the strongest motive to obedience, that was ever given to mankind.---The Apostle Paul and the primitive christians felt the force of this motive.---O that I might feel it also; may it sweetly constrain me to live to his honor, who died for my salvation, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

‘ Shed abroad thy love in my heart, that thy commands may not be grievous, but very delightful to me.’

‘ May I esteem thy precepts as gold, yea more than much fine gold.’

‘ Love the Lord, all ye his saints, and run the way of his commandments.’

When taking the sacramental bread, the christian may secretly use words to this effect :

‘ I praise thee, O my God, for all thy benefits, but in particular for that true bread which cometh down from Heaven.’

‘ Abundantly bless this provision to my spiritual nourishment and growth in grace’

‘ Or thus---Whilst my body partakes of that natural bread which represents Jesus the bread of life, O aid my spirit so to feed upon him by faith, that I may not die eternally, but live for ever.’

When about to receive the cup the communicant may say in his heart :

‘ This

‘ This is the cup of blessing (*m*)---Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ the mercy of mercies.’

‘ May the blood of Christ (of which this wine is a representation) cleanse me from all sin.’

Or thus,---‘ Grant me redemption thro’ the blood of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of thy grace.’

At the conclusion of the Ordinance.

‘ I have now professed to receive Christ Jesus, as my Lord; let it be my main care to walk so as to please him.’

‘ I have sworn, and must perform it, that I will keep thy righteous precepts.’

‘ Lord help me to cleave unto thee with full purpose of heart.’

‘ Strengthen me with might by thy Spirit in the inner man, that I may be faithful unto death.’

‘ Hallelujah---The glory of this great salvation be ascribed unto God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. *Amen and Amen.*’

MISCELLANEOUS HINTS HUMBL Y ADDRESS ED TO PROFESSORS.

THO’ we have had rapturous flights of the imagination and strong workings of the passions, whilst at the Lord’s table, we are not to judge of the benefit we derive from the ordinance by *these*, but by other evidences. (*n*)-----’Tis a thing of very ill consequence, for any to fancy that they are obliged to greater strictness the next day, or the following week after a sacrament, than they are when it hath been longer past, if they think the more strict they are

(*m*) The *sacramental cup* may be called the cup of blessing, as being an appointed means to bring to our remembrance *past*, and a pledge of our participating *future* blessings.

(*n*) True christians may be affected in very different degrees by meditation on the work of redemption: The reason is, because the *affections* or *passions* are seated partly in the body; and consequently depend in a great measure upon the constitution
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are *before* and *after* a sacramental season, the less care of their behaviour they are obliged to in the time between; for surely the behaviour should be *afterwards* the same as it ought to be *before*, and at all other seasons, that is uniformly holy.”

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This

or temperament of the body: † Accordingly some are of so even and uniform a temper, that they seem scarce to have any passions at all: Now these may experience but little warmth of mind in hearing the word; or at the table of the Lord. Some on the other hand, are moved at small matters, and soon put into a ferment; *These latter* it is probable may be more sensibly affected under ordinances than the *former*; and yet not excel them in real conformity to Christ; nay, it may be, not equal them, but may have greater failings. When therefore we have Jesus evidently set forth as crucified before our eyes, are we considerably affected for the present, and seem to admire him, but go away and forget what manner of person he was, and what reason we have to love him? However we may flatter ourselves, these are not so much the operations of *grace* as of *nature*. The professor who is assisted by this ordinance to see the great evil of sin, and the love of Christ in delivering from it, and to perceive the many forcible engagements (to all holiness of conversation) that are here set before him—so as to be more in love with his duty, to have his pious resolutions more established, the tenderness of his conscience increased, and to be brought more under the influence of the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel in all his actions—this is he who may be said, to enjoy a good opportunity, to receive most worthily, and to grow in grace, whether he *has* or *has*

† “ There are other circumstances indeed which may contribute to the *lively working of the affections* on the subject of redeeming love. For instance, when divine light shines in upon the mind of a great sinner, and he becomes a true convert; as there is joy in heaven for such a one, so his own heart must needs be transported with peculiar gratitude and pleasure, Luke vii. 47. It is easier for *the young* (ordinarily) to exercise warm affections, than for *the aged*; because the passions depend much upon the animal spirits, which fail in those who are in years—We might mention more things of the like kind, which influence the affections, but these may be sufficient to convince us, that ’tis safer to derive our hopes from a good conscience witnessing to the simplicity and godly sincerity of our conversation, than from some occasional emotion of the passions.”

This is what we are to be concerned for, and not to trust to *occasional heats and starts* in religion.”—
1 Pet. i. 15. Guard

has not the happiness* of warm and melting affections. Of course, watchful and diligent christians (of a *cooler* or *calmer* disposition) should not be disheartened, when they hear others speak of their *transports*, especially if they are ignorant, or not of a strict conversation.

Having said these things for the satisfaction of some serious humble professors, would next observe, that 'tis undoubtedly the duty of every christian to *endeavor* to have the devout affections raised to the highest pitch, when he is going to the Lord's supper: For this purpose, there must be a good acquaintance with the Scripture account of our Savior's passion, the design and end of it, Luke xxiv. 32. We should labor and pray for composure of mind; fix on some one suitable passage of sacred writ† and pursue the charming subject with closeness and intenseness of thought; whilst we are thus musing, we may hope that the holy Spirit will descend, and a sacred fire be kindled, in our breasts: yes, we may hope to participate that true spirit of ardent devotion, as shall moderate our desires towards things seen, make us more concerned for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and inspire us with vigor and alacrity in the ways of righteousness.—Therefore, the reason why some professing christians feel no more of this ardor and delight in religious exercises may be owing to their inattention, the weakness of their faith, and the imperfection of their characters. Suffer me further to remark, that tho' persons of cold natural tempers, who are but little moved by any of the common occurrences of life, may possess the true spirit of devotion, notwithstanding they are strangers to *raptures* in religion, yet those who find themselves greatly affected with what relates to their *temporal* affairs, whilst they are hardly moved at all by subjects *heavenly* and *divine*—have ground to conclude, that they are entirely destitute of the spirit of devotion, and that their love of the world exceeds their love to God and the blessed Redeemer. Vide. Whitty's Sermons and Grove on the Lord's Supper.

* “ Tho' *quick passions* may sometimes be of great use, yet at other times they may be as great a disadvantage: We have this exemplified in St. Peter—please to consult the following passages, Mat. xiv. 28, 30. Chap. xvi. 16—24. Chap. xxvi. 33, 69, 70, &c. Upon the whole, a more *sedate temper* seems more easy to the christian himself, more amiable to others, and (generally speaking) the fittest for acts of devotion; and this appears to have been the temper of that *disciple John whom Jesus loved*, or for whom he had a particular regard. John xxi. 20, 24.”——
The liableness of professors to be mistaken in the point we have been considering, may apologize for the length of this note.

† See page 260 note *.

Guard against hard thoughts of God.(o)—Be it far from us to entertain such notions of the *divine Sovereignty* (p) as we are unable to reconcile with *divine justice and love*. But let us suppose that God in dealing with his creatures “is governed by the eternal rules of wisdom, equity, and goodness.” And tho’ in certain cases it may not be apparent to us, yet where it is least so at present, if we saw things
in

(o) Is pain and trouble the common portion of the human race? This is not to be imputed to any defect in *the goodness* of God, but to *sin* in man—“Angels, who are perfectly holy (we have reason to believe) are subject to no disagreeable sensations.

Do we see some of the most excellent of the earth laboring under the greatest sufferings and reproach? Let us consider the end of the Lord. They are cast into the furnace of affliction to purify their souls more and more. They are abased, that in due time they may be exalted: They sow in tears, that they might reap in joy.

Do we hear, or read of lovely babes perishing in the furious flames, or cut off by the sword of a cruel tyrant? Let us recollect, that Providence may suffer these events to take place, as a means to free the minds of parents from an inordinate and dangerous attachment to earthly enjoyments, and to lead them to seek heavenly and immortal bliss; and that with respect to the infants themselves (as Doctor Doddridge observes in the case of the infants at Bethlehem) the agonies of a few moments might transmit them to the abodes of peace and joy.

(p) The afore-named pious writer, in a note on Rom. ix. 13. *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*† thus expresseth himself.—It is certain the apostle does not here speak of the eternal state of Jacob and Esau (whatever some may suppose deducible from what he says) nor does he indeed so much speak of their *persons* as of their *posterity*, since it is plainly to *the posterity* that both the prophecies which he quotes in support of his argument, refer Gen. xxv. 23. Malachi i. 2, 3. *God’s laying waste the heritage of the Edemites for the dragons of the wilderness*, is so different a thing from his appointing the person of Esau to eternal misery, by a mere act of sovereignty, without regard to any thing done, or to be done by him to deserve it, that I will rather submit to any censure from my fellow-servants than deal so freely with my Maker, as to conclude the one from the other.—We have here an instance of the importance of attending to a direction already given (p. 211) viz. to compare scripture with scripture in order to know the true meaning of a particular passage.

† See Duty and Inter. p. 140, note (o).

in their connection, we may observe the above-mentioned attributes most illustriously displayed, Job xlii. 12. James v. 11.

Lay not such a stress on any supposed past attainments in the christian life, as to grow secure or negligent, upon an apprehension that all is safe and well. 1 Cor. ix. 24, &c. Heb. iv. 1. Doubtless, we should give an earnest heed lest we take conviction for conversion, allowed sins for christian infirmities, and a warm flush of the fancy (*q*) for the witnessings of the holy Spirit. If

(*q*) We believe, that God doth suggest unspeakable comforts to good men; but then it is to be considered, that this is a gift he seldom bestows, unless in extraordinary cases, when 'tis necessary to encourage us to some great work, or to support us under some very heavy suffering. And tho' such immediate suggestions of the spirit of God may serve to good purposes at such seasons, yet they are by no means to be built upon as the foundation of our ordinary standing assurance. For so long as there is an evil spirit without, and a disordered fancy within us, that can imitate these divine whispers, we are in danger of mistaking an injection of Satan, and the deliriums of the imagination, for the testimony of the holy Spirit; and by this means may be often lulled into false confidences.—Scott's Christian Life. Says the excellent Mr. Jennings, having been to hear a lecture, when I came home and was retired, resolving to enter upon a narrow search of my heart and ways, I had on a sudden such a flash of joy darted in as took me off from the duty of examination, and possessed me with a strong confidence, that there was a thorough work of grace already. But when the flash was over, and I entered again upon serious reflections, there was a second flash of joy after the former manner. But as soon as it was past, I began to suspect that both these were the delusions of Satan, 2 Cor. xi. 14. because they tended to take me off from a necessary duty. Returning to the work and searching my heart about the reality of my conversion, I had reason to fear, that at this time I was in an unconverted state.—Therefore, whatever immediate suggestions of the spirit, we may apprehend that we have been favored with, still let us examine ourselves by that written word, which contains the unerring dictates of the divine Spirit, and learn from thence whether we have the marks of salvation. This is the way to be preserved from self-deceit, and to attain to that solid joy in the Holy Ghost, which is intimately connected with an holy temper and conduct: Rom. xiv. 17. Phil. iv. 8, 9. Please to turn to p. 102, of the Treatise before you. Let me
add

If you are troubled with blasphemous thoughts, 'tis the advice of the good old divine Mr. Greenham, that you should not *fear* but *abhor* them. And when some christians were miserably afflicted with apprehensions that they had committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, he used to tell them, that if they would not have committed it, it was certain that they had not fallen into it.†

In searching after truth, beware of the influence of common prejudices. For example, we are not to infer that a doctrine is true, because 'tis professed by numbers; (r) or has been espoused by great and good men; (s) or makes a strong impression

add in this place, that professors should not be ready to speak comfort to themselves, on account of some scripture promise, that is suddenly brought to their remembrance, till they have seriously inquired, whether they are such persons as *the word of promise* supposes. He who obeys *the precept* may take comfort from *the promise*.

† See p. 74 of the Duty and Interest, by the Author.

(r) Were *the multitudes* who profess a doctrine an argument for its truth, such an argument may be urged by Mahometans, for the delusions of that impostor have a greater spread at the present time than the Gospel of Christ (which indeed may be easily accounted for, as I have shewn elsewhere, see Duty and Interest, p. 88, note (§).—Popularity (as a late Author observes) is not to be ascribed to the *truth* of mens particular sentiments, but to other causes; especially to an happy manner of addressing a popular auditory, with respect to which some men of all sentiments are formed defective, and the best of men are sometimes most so.—Again, 'tis manifest, that we are not to reckon a doctrine *false* because 'tis embraced by few. Even the personal ministry of our blessed Lord (comparatively speaking) was attended with small success, John iii. 32.—Strong prejudices, custom, worldly interest, &c. may prevent the spread of the truth for a while, whereas afterwards it may flourish greatly. Consult Isaiah xlix. 4—7.

(s) We should remember that the best of men are liable to error; accordingly history acquaints us, that those who have given equal proofs of zeal in the service of God and Christ, have considerably varied in their sentiments. This was particularly the case as to those celebrated reformers Luther and Melancton on *the one part*, and Œcolampadius and Zuinglius on *the other*.

sion on the imagination: (*t*) or because of the vehemence and positivity of the speaker. (*u*) I say, we are not to esteem a doctrine *true* or *false* merely on the account of either of these things.

To come to the knowledge of the truth, we should aim to divest ourselves of every kind of prejudice “lay aside anger, pride, &c. and repair to that fountain whose streams all confess to be pure. Now this fountain is not *the confession of faith* of any particular denomination of christians, but only *the word of God*, which is infallibly true. For tho’ various persons and parties since the Apostles days, have been ready to claim infallibility, none besides the Apostles and Prophets (who indeed gave abundant proof of a divine mission) can justly make the following them, or their doctrine, the standard of truth.

(*t*) Surprising impressions have been made on the minds of men by principles that are now universally condemned. So that were we to judge of truth by this criterion, and neglect the dictates of reason (as enlightened by the word of God) ungrounded fears, or delusive hopes may be raised in the breast; indeed there is no knowing whither such impressions will carry us; or what they may stir us up to do. For hereby we lay ourselves open to the power of all sorts of delusions, and provoke our gracious Father to give us up to these most formidable evils, as a just judgment upon us for refusing to make use of the *candle of the Lord*.—See Flavel, Vol. IV. p. 204, 260, and Turner’s Letters, p. 172.

(*u*) The confident manner in which such persons express themselves (about points (it may be) concerning which the wisest and holiest of men have entertained different opinions) instead of being an argument for the truth of what they affirm, only indicates the warmth of their tempers, and that they have not read, or closely thought on the subject; and consequently are unacquainted with the difficulties attending it. Therefore we see that some of these persons, when their youthful heat begins to abate, and they have maintained a freedom of intercourse with those of different sentiments become more moderate, nay even embrace the opposite tenets.—We who sustain the ministerial character should bear in mind, that no minister is authoritatively to impose his own sentiments upon his hearers, since an Apostle says—*Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy.* 2 Cor. i. 24.

truth. The apostolic doctrine, as contained in the Scriptures, and *that alone* is to be the rule of faith. (w) 1 John iv. 6.

Examine the sacred Oracles with diligence, patience, (x) and impartiality; (y) in your reasonings (z) with others about the meaning of a passage of Scripture be calm; and be earnest with God in prayer
for

(w) Those worthy persons who suffered for conscience sake in the year 1147, would admit of no testimonies for the proof of the doctrines of religion, but only out of the Scriptures, and therefore were called apostolics. Gillies Vol. I. p. 31.

Mr. Fox (the famous Author of the Book of Martyrs) refused subscribing to any thing but the bible.

Saith the great Mr. Chillingworth—I see plainly that there are Popes against Popes, Councils against Councils, some Fathers against other Fathers, the same Fathers against themselves, a consent of Fathers of one age, against a consent of Fathers of another age.—In a word, there is no sufficient certainty, but of Scripture only, for any considering man to build upon. *This* therefore, and *this* only I have reason to believe: *This* I will profess; according to *this* I will live; and for *this* if there be occasion, I will not only willingly, but even gladly loose my life.

That we may be led to keep close to the word of God, would recommend the frequent recollection of such passages as these, Galat. i. 8. 2 Tim. iii. 15, &c. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

(x) It is more for our ease, to take for granted, that the sentiments in which we have been educated are true. But *this* does not correspond with the advice of St. Paul.—*Prove all things, &c.* 1 Thes. v. 21.—What pains were taken by some in the days of persecution to *know the holy Scriptures*, Gillies Vol. I. p. 76.

Truth (says Mr. Flavel) lies deep, like the rich veins of gold; if therefore we would get the treasure, we must (as the inspired writer expresses it) not only *beg*, but *dig* for this end.—Prov. ii. 3, 4.

(y) Pay an equal attention to all Scripture, I mean to those parts that seem to *oppose*, as to those which *accord* with your present sentiments; else how can it ever be expected, that a right knowledge of the mind and will of God should be attained.

(z) Let me take some notice here of the use of reason in the matters of religion.—“What we are sure God speaks be it ever so incomprehensible to human reason, reason has nothing to do but to attend and submit. Yet notwithstanding this concession, reason acts in character, when it humbly endeavors to find out God’s mind expressed in Scripture words, and examines *human forms*

for the teachings of his Spirit.†---Thus acting, we may hope to be secured from every destructive error, and to be led into every truth necessary to the faithful discharge of our duty at present, and to our perfect and immortal happiness hereafter. Suitable to this sentiment are, Matt. vii. 7. John vii. 17. James i. 5.

Those who have voluntarily joined themselves to a religious society, should consider what are the duties they owe the pastor of it, (a) and their fellow-members, (b) and discharge them with becoming attention

forms of expression by *sacred* ones."—Much to the same purpose are the words of Mr. Hervey—I declare, I look upon my religion to be reason in its highest refinement. My reason says, admit nothing without satisfactory proofs, and when any thing is revealed by God, receive it as an oracle. I cannot but think that every part of our religion (tho' absolutely undiscoverable by reason) is, when discover'd and understood, perfectly rational, as it comports with the attributes of the Godhead, suits the state of man, and is admirably adapted to display the divine glory, and redress human misery.

† See Page 212.

(a) Certain of the duties of church members towards their pastors are—Cordially to receive and submit to their administrations in doctrine and discipline, so far as is consistent with true christian liberty, and the due preservation of the rights of conscience, and private judgment, James i. 21, 22. Heb. xiii. 7, 17.—To pray heartily for them, 2 Thes. iii. 1, 2. (See p. 207.) ---To provide for their temporal support and maintenance, 1 Cor. ix. 7, 13, 14. Gal. vi. 6.—If they have more pastors or teachers than one, they should take heed of undue distinctions, and dividing into parties in favor of one to the prejudice of the other. 1 Cor. i. 10, 12.

(b) The duties of church members one towards another are—To meet together for social prayer and free converse on religious subjects * Mal. iii. 16. Acts i. 14. Heb. x. 24, 25.—To cultivate

* "Stated religious conferences in particular should be managed with great caution and prudence, or else instead of answering valuable purposes, they will serve only to expose the weakness of some, cherish the spiritual pride of others, bring strife and contention into the church, and thereby religion itself into contempt. And even social prayer, tho' a more manifest and necessary duty, and what should be encouraged more than it is, is not without its inconveniences, and dangers; if not properly conducted."

attention and diligence. In the prosecution of this work, we should abhor the thought of adopting any unworthy methods, to weaken other sacred interests, with a view to increase the particular church to which we are united: Therefore if we perceive one of another society expressing dislike to his present connections, on account of some frivolous affair (where conscience is not concerned) instead of striving to make a proselyte of such an individual, we ought rather do all we can to remove the prejudice, and to promote a reconciliation. This is what a regard to the general cause of Christ requires at our hands. Phil. i. 18.—If a person is disposed to withdraw himself from that church with which he now holds communion—before he proceeds, he should weigh the matter well, consider whether the reason for such a separation be sufficiently important to lead him to take a step that may endanger the tranquility of the church; he should advise with those who are most capable of giving him direction; use every proper mean to get his judgment rightly informed, and especially seek wisdom from above. And then,

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vate peace and harmony, avoiding whisperings and backbitings, Rom. xiv. 19. 2 Cor. xii. 20. Mutually to give and take reproof in the spirit of meekness, Matt. xviii. 15, 17. Gal vi. 1. To keep their places in the church as long as a good conscience, and as far as providential circumstances will permit, James iv. 7. *Submit yourselves to God*, or as the expression in the original exactly signifies *keep the rank*, even that rank which God has assigned you, Hearing a variety begets at least a weak fondness for novelty, and an unsteady conduct in religion, (see p. 221.) However in cities and great towns where there are several churches, and where the members of those churches may happen to live at a considerable distance from the place, where the church to which they belong usually meets, it cannot be unlawful for them to attend the common duties of public worship occasionally nearer home; tho' a distinguishing regard should be paid to the particular society with which they have connected themselves, in order to prevent that confusion and even ruin to the very existence of particular churches, which must be the consequence of indiscriminate and unconnected assemblies. Mr. Turner's Compendium of social Religion, p. 128, &c.

if he is convinced that 'tis not an itch for novelty, or any other low end, but the preserving a good conscience that induces him to withdraw, let him leave that christian society in the most peaceable and orderly manner. Rom. xiv. 5. 1 Cor. x. 32. Ephes. iv. 3.

To prevent our judging and condemning those who differ from us in their religious sentiments, we ought to reflect, that many things which divide the christian world are controversies about *words* more than *ideas*—that at best we see thro' a glass darkly, and therefore are liable to censure such as do indeed hold the truth as it is in Jesus.—That the grand principle of protestantism is the right of private judgment (*c*) that sincere christians may be of different opinions owing to the diversity of their constitutions, capacities, educations, connections, or the like (*d*) so that after our utmost pains, we may not all be of one mind even in things that are esteemed of moment—that we are solemnly forbid to censure others. (*e*) Rom. xiv. 4, 10.—that the Scriptures

(*c*) Yet while protestants acknowledge in words (says a writer of the present day) that the scriptures are the rule of faith, and alone sufficient to make men wise unto salvation—instead of the scriptures, parties would slip in their own explications, bind their decisions upon others as an infallible standard, and oblige them to see with their eyes. And what is this but popery under another name? It is the most pernicious part of it, having heretofore occasioned violent persecutions, horrible massacres so diametrically opposite to the Gospel, Luke ix. 54, 55, 56.

(*d*) Therefore (as Mr. Philip Henry used to say) we may as soon expect all the clocks in a town to strike together, as to see all good people of one mind in every thing on this side Heaven.

(*e*) 'Tis to be remembered, that we are speaking only of matters of *opinion*, and not of *practice*. We may (as one observes) safely say of such as live a wicked ungodly life, that they cannot inherit the Kingdom of God without true repentance, because the scripture has expressly asserted the same; but in matters of opinion, there are so many allowances to be frequently made, for the strength of early prejudices, and the want of advantages for being better informed, that 'tis the hardest thing in the world for

tures most strictly inculcate unanimity and charity,
 1 Cor. i. 10. (f) Phil. ii. 1, 2. Yea do they not rank
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for us to say upon good grounds, that a person's mistake is inconsistent with the sincerity of his heart; or that he is in such a fundamental † error, as will certainly exclude him from the benefits of salvation. In this let no man be forward to judge another, rather let the judgment be left to God.

(f) Now I beseech you brethren,—that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. The Apostle could not here mean *unity of opinion*, because he does not urge any argument to reduce them to such an agreement; nor so much as declare what that one opinion was in which he would have them agree: The words must therefore express that *peaceful and unanimous temper* which christians of different opinions may, and ought to maintain towards each other, and which will do a much greater honor to the Gospel than the most perfect uniformity in sentiment that can be imagined. Doddridge.

† It may not be improper to take some notice in this place of what is termed *a fundamental article of faith*—Whatever is a fundamental (it has been said) must not only be a truth, and revealed by God, but must be a truth so far revealed to the person to whom tis supposed to be a fundamental, as that he is utterly inexcusable, and can't possibly miss discerning it, if he be sincere: Consequently that may be a fundamental to one man (or a truth necessary to be believed in order to his salvation) that is not so to another, who is differently circumstanced. For example, what may be a fundamental with reference to us protestants, who by the good providence of God have the free use of our Bibles, might not be so to our ancestors before the reformation, when the Bible was locked up from them &c. Further, that may not be a fundamental to the same man at one time, which may become so at another, even as soon as he hath had the means of conviction offered him. See the case of Nathaniel, who (tho' our Lord declares him to be an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile) yet being led away with the common prejudice of the Jews, would not at first admit that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah; but having strictly searched into the matter, he received such satisfaction, that addressing himself to Jesus, he says, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel*, Joh. i. 43—51. See likewise the case of the Apostles relative to that great doctrine the resurrection of Christ, Luke xxiv. 11, 34, &c.

a turbulent, disputing (g) and uncharitable spirit among the worst of crimes. Gal. v. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5. It may also be remarked, that a bigoted temper causes us to overlook the real excellencies of our dissenting fellow-christians, and dissuades us from following them, even in those parts of their conduct where we may do it with a safe conscience and possibly to no small advantage. (h)

Methinks for such reasons as the above, we should be very cautious how we venture to call others (who may see some points in a different light from us) I say we should be exceedingly cautious how we venture to speak of them as *strangers to the Gospel*. (i) as *denying the Lord that bought them*. 2 Pet. ii. 1. Or how we apply to them that passage we meet with in
St.

(g) Whereas friendly debate may serve to promote the interest of truth, religious controversies warmly agitated are productive of considerable evils: These swell the heart with pride; estrange the minds of christians from each other; give rise sometimes to shocking expressions, and are most contrary to the power and spirit of practical religion and godliness, 2 Tim. ii. 14, 16, 23, 24, 25.

(h) It must hurt a truly candid and judicious christian, to hear a person say, I disapprove of *so and so*, because 'tis practised by such a party. Doubtless the inquiry should be, whether the particular practice is *good in itself*, if so, then let it be imitated from what quarter soever it comes. Were this rule adhered to, every one may see, that our differences would lessen, our mutual affection be increased, and the christian church attain to greater degrees of purity and perfection.

(i) In like manner, it should be far, very far from any of us of the sacred character, who are all equally fallible, to charge our brethren of an unblameable conversation and useful life with not preaching the Gospel, because their views of it differ from our own.—Truly the Gospel is not confined to this, or that party of men.—'Tis possible that they who monopolize the Gospel to themselves may be furthest from the spirit of it, and most mistaken, where most positive. No Judge of heresy (says the eminent Doctor Owen) since the Apostles Days, but hath been obnoxious to error in that judgment; and those that have been forwardest to assume a judicature, and power of discerning between truth and error, so as to have others regulated thereby, have erred most foully. Owen's Collect. Sermon, p. 227.

St. John, 2d Epist. verse 10. *If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.*(*k*) Nay, so far should we be from treating them in this manner, that if they profess to love our Lord Jesus Christ, and are giving this testimony of the sincerity of their affection, viz. walking in all his commandments and ordinances—we should embrace them with heart and hand, admit them (when desired) into the communion of the church (*l*) and readily unite with them in those schemes that are adapted to advance the common interest of our great Master. For do they not appear to bear such marks of real discipleship, as are laid down by Christ himself, and his Apostles after him. Matt. vii. 17, 20. John xiv. 23. Chap. xv. 14. Ephes. vi. 24. Rom. x. 9? Let us not therefore be dissatisfied with these plain evidences, and demand others, respecting which we are more liable to be deceived: Since in this case, we may be found to have condemned some whom Christ approves, and who are the living members of his mystical body.—An observation made by the worthy Mr. Philip Henry, and another by the pious Dr. Doddridge are very deserving the attentive regard
of

(*k*) As the words of the Apostles, Peter and John, quoted above, are to be considered as referring to apostates, or to those who endeavored to propagate doctrines utterly inconsistent with the known doctrines of the Gospel, just to answer worldly ends, how does this in the least countenance our treating with coldness and neglect, such, who tho' they do not agree in sentiment with us, yet acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, the Savior of the world, the only Mediator betwixt God and man, profess an high esteem for him, and conscientiously keep his commands; and who (for ought we know) have been as diligent and serious in searching after the truth, and as fervent in prayer for divine teachings as ourselves.

(*l*) Where can we read that the primitive christians, notwithstanding some very wide differences among them, upon points they thought of the highest consequence, Acts xv. 1, 2, &c. were ever encouraged by the Apostles to separate from each other, but rather they taught the Jews and Gentiles to bear with and receive one another, Rom. xv. 1, 7. Chap. xvi. 17. Turner.

of professors.—“It is not so much our difference of opinion that doth us the mischief, but the mismanagement of that difference.”—“Love is the first and greatest of our Lord’s commands; and after all the clamor that has been made about notions and forms, he who practises and teaches love best, shall be the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven.”

—If we would honor our blessed Lord in the eyes of the world, we ought like the pious Psalmist to *take heed to our ways, that we offend not with our tongues*. Vain and foolish, or censorious (*m*) and unkind language, is a dreadful disgrace to the christian profession; and whatever favorable thoughts such may entertain of themselves, an inspired Writer has declared, that he who governs not his tongue is destitute of the Spirit of true piety, is a self-deceiver, James i. 26. Let us then aim in our discourse both to please, and edify those with whom we converse, (*n*) Ephes. iv. 29. Colos. iv. 6.—It becomes us to guard against that lightness in our behavior, which makes a person appear weak and little, and to shew that christian gravity which the Apostle recommends, Philip iv. 8. *Whatsoever things are honest or (as the word imports) grave, think on these things*.—Follow after humility (*o*) even that humility, which

(*m*) There is a jewish proverb to this effect—An evil tongue kills three, him that speaks, him that hears, and him of whom he speaks.—’Tis mentioned in the life of Doctor Mather, a fellow of the Royal Society, that he made it a rule to speak evil of no man, unless it was to answer some good purpose; as for instance, to keep others from being imposed upon by such a one’s artifice, or for a warning to those who may be in danger of the same crime, and then insist upon *the crime* without mentioning *the name* of the offender, unless (I say) there was an apparent necessity for so doing. Tit. iii. 2.

(*n*) See page 183 of this Treatise.

(*o*) The more *humble*, the more ready we shall be in the case of offences and injuries, to apply ourselves first for peace. It argues (as the excellent Mr. Hugh Owen long since observed) pride, and more love to ourselves than to Jesus Christ and his ways,

which renders the christian lovely in the sight of God and man, Psal. cxxxviii. 6, and leads to the heights of celestial glory. Matt. xxiii. 12. *(p)* *He that shall humble himself shall be exalted.* How beautifully was that humble temper, which Jesus inculcated in his preaching, displayed in his own conduct, particularly when he washed his disciples feet, *(q)* John xiii. 5.—Contentment with that situation, in which the providence of God has placed us (tho' it may be low and mean) is a grace very ornamental to the christian character. 'Tis the apostolic charge, 1 Cor. vii. 24. *Brethren let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God,* i. e. “let every one who is converted to christianity, in consequence of the call of God by the Gospel of Christ, patiently, and contentedly

ways, and religion suffers, when professors instead of complying with that divine command Matt. xviii. 15.—say, ‘Its they offended, and not I, they should come to me, and not I to them.’ Turn to page 257, Note * and page 263, Note †—The same humble mind will lead us not to aggravate what seems to be amiss in others; and if a good sense can be put upon what another says, and does, never to take it in a bad one: and particularly to make the most candid excuses in any case, wherein we think ourselves to have been treated unkindly. It has been esteemed a just and beautiful observation of Archbishop Tillotson, that the gentle rebuke our Lord gives his disciples, and the kind apology he makes for them, Matt. xxvi. 40, 41. are very remarkable; and the more so, as his mind was then discomposed with sorrow; so that he must have a deeper and tenderer sense of the unkindness of his friends.

(p) No one sentence of our Lord's is so frequently repeated as this, which occurs at least ten times in the Evangelists.

(q) In so doing Jesus performed one of the lowest offices of menial attendants: This was so to a proverb, see 1. Sam. xxv. 41. Hereby he intended to instruct his disciples, in every age, (not that they should practise just the same thing, because in many places and circumstances, it would be rather an inconvenience than a kindness, to do it for our friends) but that we ought to regard both the necessary preservation and mutual comfort of each other, and where those ends are to be answered, we should with pleasure pursue the humblest offices of duty and love towards those in the lowest stations. Doddridge.

tentedly continue in his station, (*r*) out of regard to him, who has appointed it, if he cannot change it to his advantage by such methods as God approves." And he says verse 21. *Art thou called being a servant or (as the original signifies) a slave, care not for it.* (*s*) The contented thankful (*t*) christian will of course manifest that cheerfulness in his common deportment, which does no small credit to the cause of religion, and is quite consistent with the gravity enforced above. 1 Thes. v. 16.

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(*r*) As perhaps we have sometimes heard even professors speaking in a strain that favors too much of envying others, in higher stations, and as if they were not properly sensible, that different circumstances of life are permitted, and directed by God, to bring about ends worthy the perfections of his nature, and conducive to the general welfare of mankind.—We would beg such to consider (as a late writer has judiciously remarked) that in the variety of conditions and capacities, that runs thro' all the nations of the earth, there is an evident excellence. Many useful and important duties and comforts arise out of them, which could never take place was there an absolute equality of circumstances and abilities.—Let the christian (whose outward condition is low) further reflect, that whatever are the inconveniences and disadvantages of such a condition, God would never have allotted that condition to his particular share, had not God known that all circumstances considered, it would be fittest for him; that God foresaw that plenty and abundance would have been very hurtful to him, and that straits and indigences would be instrumental to prepare him for better things.—2. Cor. iv. 17. The necessitous christian should too recollect with great pleasure, that his present indigent state is not only for his own personal benefit, but also subservient to promote the future happiness of those in a superior station, who know his wants and are inclined from a right principle to minister to the relief of them. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19.

(*s*) If liberty itself (as one hath finely noted on this text) *that liberty* which is the first of all temporal blessings, be not of so great importance, as that a man blessed with the high hopes and glorious consolations of christianity should make himself very solicitous about it, how much less is there in those comparatively trifling distinctions, on which many lay so disproportionate, so extravagant a stress.

(*t*) See the reasons for thankfulness page 57 &c. of the Treatise before you.—To encourage to the work of thanksgiving, Mr. Henry was wont to say—new mercies call for new returns of praise, and then those new returns will fetch in new mercies.

Let us likewise, Sirs, act the part of zealous christians. Our zeal should discover itself in endeavoring to advance (according to our various abilities) the knowledge, holiness, and salvation of relations, friends, and others, as well as in exerting ourselves for their good in a temporal view,^(u) Thus we are to *strive together for the faith of the Gospel*, Phil. i. 27. Or as another Apostle expresses it, to *contend earnestly for the faith*^(v) *which was once delivered to the saints*,

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Jude

(u) 'Tis observed in the life of Mr. Henry, that whenever he gave an alms for the body, he usually gave with it a spiritual alms, some word of reproof, instruction, or comfort, as suited the occasion.—Such opportunities should in an especial manner be embraced, if the party applying for assistance be one, who has made a profession of religion, but has acted inconsistently with it. I say, these cases deserve peculiar notice, not only for their own sakes, but likewise because of the great influence of their evil example on others; even a very close admonition at such a time, instead of irritating, may have a good effect. *Rebuke them sharply*, saith the Apostle, *that they may be sound in the faith*, Tit. i. 13. or, (as the context explains it) that they may renounce their corrupt practices condemned by the Gospel, the unerring rule of faith; and particularly that they may cease from the infamous and most pernicious sin of lying, see ver. 12. and lead holy lives, as became the professors of *sound* and wholesome *doctrine*, that doctrine of holiness, that excellent spiritual food which being received into the heart tends to promote the health, vigor, beauty and happiness of the soul, Chap. ii. 1, 2, 3, &c.

(v) By the term *faith* is here meant the word of faith*, or the Gospel, which contains the doctrines delivered by Christ and his Apostles, respecting what we are to believe, and to do. This Gospel as expressed *not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the holy Ghost teacheth*, I say, this pure Gospel, is the great thing, the interest of which we should strive to advance, both at home and abroad, by exhorting our fellow creatures daily to consult it, John v. 39; exemplifying its holy precepts in our own lives and conversation, 1 Pet. iii. 1; devoting of our substance to religious uses, Prov. iii. 9; by a readiness (if needs be) to suffer in the defence of the truth, Phil. i. 12, 13, 14, and by exciting others according to their abilities, to engage in doing good, and to continue therein, Gal. vi. 9. Adding to all this our prayers to God, to prosper our attempts, to cause his kingdom of grace to increase, till it fills the whole earth,

* Parallel texts Acts vi. 7. Gal. i. 23.

Jude verse 3. 'In conducting our zeal (having examined the word of God to determine what is right, and ought to be done) let prudence and discretion guide us, that our design may not be defeated, nor our good, evil spoken of.'—In order that our hearts may glow with christian zeal, (*w*) let us pay an attentive regard to former hints;* consider the many noble patterns of divine zeal that have appeared in our world; more especially let our eyes be fixed on the
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earth, 2 Theff. iii. 1. And as directed above, we should not only *strive* but *strive earnestly* to promote the knowledge and practice of the Gospel; for 'tis an affair that deserves intenseness of mind, and the exerting every nerve, since we have such unanswerable evidence† that the Gospel is a revelation from Heaven (see page 229, &c.) and as it is the greatest blessing that was ever bestowed on the children of men.—With regard to our own explanations of scripture, which are the result of diligent reading, close meditation, and fervent addresses to God, we are on all proper occasions in the spirit of meekness, and love, Ephes. iv. 15, to declare them, and produce our arguments for them. Yet at the same time, requesting our hearers, in imitation of the primitive christians to search the scriptures for themselves, to see whether those things are so, or not, Acts xvii. 11: and if in consequence of such an examination, they profess conscientiously to differ from us, we ought (as urged before) calmly and impartially to attend to what they have to say in favor of their opinions, and treat them with that affection, which is due to fellow christians.

(*w*) *Some* shew affection and give encouragement to those who use their own distinguishing modes and acts of worship, while they look shy upon those who from conscience towards God, think and act otherwise. But is this christian zeal? Such persons should seriously inquire, whether it be not self-love in another form; whether hereby they are not respecting and defending themselves and their own party rather than Christ and his cause? Phil. ii. 21.—*Others* are warm and eager in defending and propagating their own sentiments on controversial points; they censure and condemn all who do not hold these, and represent them it may be as enemies to the truth. Now here, does not the disciple of the meek and loving Savior appear to be lost in the bitterness of the disputer of this world? What saith St. James Chap. iii. 14. *If you have bitter envying or zeal* (as the word signifies) *and strife in your hearts, glory not; do not call this grace, and zeal for God.* Orton on christian zeal.

* See page 187, &c.

† Duty and Interest, p. 91, note (k)

the Lord Jesus Christ, who *put on righteousness as a breast-plate, and was clad with zeal as a cloke*; who resigned for a while *the glory he had with his Father before the foundation of the world*, and dwelt in mortal flesh, willingly submitted to toil, hunger, and thirst, to the contradiction and revilings of sinners, whilst pursuing his Father's honor and the salvation of men: And oh what zeal fired his heart, when to complete the work that was given him to do, he meekly yielded to a death, disgraceful to the last degree, and painful beyond conception. (x) Now it is described as a great end for which Christ gave himself for us, viz. *that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.* Tit. ii. 14.—Moreover, we should earnestly seek the influences of the Holy Ghost, “*To shew the necessity of this, observe the conduct of the Apostles before, and after the ascension of Christ. Before it, they were all contending who should be greatest, and enjoy the chief honor and profit in that temporal kingdom, which they supposed their Master was about to establish. But after the descent of the Spirit upon them, when they received larger communications of his enlightening and sanctifying influences, as well as of his extraordinary gifts, they declined no labors, nor sufferings for Christ's sake, but rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame, reproach and death in his cause. Let us therefore pray, that the influences of this Spirit may be communicated to us, and to all around, to purify the earthly mind,* to

(x) Accordingly we are told, the Romans were wont to express their idea of *pain* by a word borrowed from crucifixion,

☞ These Scriptures, chiefly relating to the duty of christians one towards another, and towards mankind in general deserve to be often, and attentively considered.—Psal. xv. 1—4. Prov. vi. 16—20. Micah vi. 8. Matt. v. 9. Chap. vii. 1—6. Chap. xi. 29. Rom. xii. 16—19. 1 Cor. x. 12. Galat. v. 19—26. Ephes. iv. 1—3. Philip ii. 3. Chap. iv. 5. 1 Tim. v. 13, 14. Chap. vi. 1—6. Tit. iii. 8, 14. James iii. 17, 18. Chap. iv. 11, 12. 2 Pet. i. 4—12.

to inflame the cold affections, to make each one *zealously affected always in a good thing*. Gal. iv. 18. 'O that we may shine with all the radiant graces of a christian evidently meetening for glory,' and so shew forth the praises of him who hath called us into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ.

THE PRINCIPAL EXCUSES FOR NEGLECTING THE LORD'S SUPPER BRIEFLY ANSWERED, AND AN EARNEST EXHORTATION TO CHRISTIANS TO COME TO THE SACRED TABLE.

'Tis indeed greatly to be deplored, that such multitudes who wear the christian name, should live in the habitual neglect of this divine institution. Was a pagan (who had ever heard, or read Luke xxii. 19, 20,) to be present at our public worship on sacramental sabbaths, and see one and another, the aged as well as the young, leaving the society as soon as this distinguishing ordinance was about to be administered, would he not be likely to conclude that those persons were the professors of some other religion?

Among the various things which prevent an attendance on the Lord's supper, one seems to be an apprehension, that those who do not communicate are not obliged to that circumspection and care in their behavior, and discourse, that those are who do communicate.

Shall return an answer here in the words of a pious Author, "Do not they know that whatever blessing they enjoy, temporal or spiritual, their obligation to serve and glorify God is thereby rendered the greater?" Are they not under stronger obligations to a holy life for being christians than if they were heathens? Protestants than if they had been trained up in the darkness of popery? But if it was in their choice would they therefore change conditions with Papists or Heathens? Whether they are communicants or not, they are obliged by their profession of christianity to an observation of the self

self same duties, and to an abstinence from the same sins, as they value the favor of their God, and their Savior. Besides, it is not only *actually receiving* the Lord's supper, but their being *invited* to receive it that they are to give an account of; nor is their privilege *the less* because they neglect to make any advantage of it; on the contrary, so much *the greater* is their guilt and folly.

The plea of others may be—they have so much worldly business upon their hands, that they cannot spare sufficient time for examining themselves in private previous to their partaking the sacrament; or are so situated, that 'tis out of their power to give a stated attendance on preparatory sermons; besides they diligently observe the other duties of public worship, and therefore hope that God will not be strict to mark this omission, especially as it is so common a case.

We reply, “that if being engaged in a multiplicity of business is not the effect of choice but necessity, and you would willingly, if you could, shake off this and every other incumbrance, you have no reason for banishing yourselves from any ordinance of the Gospel.—Employ what time you can command, and may find to be of use, for the putting your heart into a suitable frame, for waiting upon the Lord, and you may hope to be graciously accepted.” (a)

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(a) It hath been well observed, that the examination St. Paul recommended to the Corinthians, 1 Epist. Chap. xi. 28, before they partook of the Lord's supper, was entirely owing to this, that some of the corinthian christians had gone aside in their practice from the institution of Christ. The examination therefore proposed by the Apostle appears to have been—that christians should consider, what they were going to perform, and see that their hearts were engaged therein. The present remark ought to be remembered, that so no believer (who has approved himself to his own conscience in these particulars) may make it a pretence for his passing by a sacramental opportunity, that he has not had time for a long examination into his whole
past

As for preparatory sermons, we know that these are not commanded in Scripture, and therefore are not necessarily connected with the Lord's supper; of course, the want of opportunity for hearing them, is no sort of excuse for absenting ourselves from the Lord's table. (b) And with respect to a close and regular

past conduct. This does not in the least imply, that christians may not wisely chuse to spend a longer time in serious consideration and prayer, just before their coming to the holy communion, if they have leisure, and think it of more advantage to them to do it upon this occasion than upon any other. But then, we are not to confine self-examination to sacramental seasons, for this is a duty proper for every season of our time, and every part of our life. Turn to page 184.

(b) For christians stately to set apart an hour or two of their common time to meet together for reading and hearing, or religious conference and prayer, tends considerably to their mutual spiritual edification, Prov. xxvii. 17. Heb. x. 25. And it is to be lamented that both rich and poor are so backward in this respect. The poor perhaps may think themselves excused, because of the straitness of their circumstances: But tho' we own that attendance on several social meetings, in the course of the week, may break in upon the necessary concerns of life, and hereby the good ways of God be discredited,—yet certainly the small portion of time just mentioned, can make no great difference in a worldly view, nay 'tis not an unlikely method for furthering our temporal† as well as spiritual interest.—Nevertheless, says an aged minister of eminent piety, it may be questioned, whether the custom of many christian churches to observe days of fasting and preparation, and to attend sermons and prayers previous to receiving the Lord's supper, and with a particular view to that service

† The Rev. Mr. Brand meeting a poor man, that was wont to attend his lectures, but had for some time absented—he inquired of him the reason? The poor man replied, it was not for want of inclination, but that he could not spare the time; his whole week-days earnings hardly supplying the necessities of his family. Mr. Brand told him, that rather than his soul should suffer loss, he would allow him six-pence a week, which the man acknowledged was more than he could earn in the time omitted from his labor. This man had at last let his allowance run into a longer arrear than ordinary, which Mr. Brand questioning him about, he thanked him for his last supply, acknowledging he now found God so to bless his labors, that he had no further need of that aid.

regular performance of the rest of the duties of religion—how can that lessen our obligation to obey in the present instance? James ii. 10.—Ask yourselves then “If you believe the Lord’s supper to be a duty that Christ has enjoined his disciples in every age of the church, can you be safe in the neglect of it?” A Jew who refused to keep the passover, tho’ only the memorial of a temporal deliverance, was to be cut off from the people of Israel. Numb. ix. 13. And is there nothing for those to fear, who neglect the christian passover, that memorial of an unspeakably greater deliverance, and who go on with unconcern in this omission, taking it as it were for granted without due examination, that ’tis a matter of little moment?—Neither will it render your conduct excusable, to plead the examples of multitudes, no not even of those who on other accounts are worthy of imitation. If such live in the omission of a duty that is evidently appointed by divine authority, *here* we are to leave them, and follow the word and example of Christ.

Many are afraid that they are unmeet for the holy communion, and therefore abstain from it.

We answer, some assert, that the Lord’s supper (like other ordinances) should be open even to the most immoral, as a means of reclaiming them. But says Mr. Turner this is to set up a fellowship betwixt Christ

vice be worthy of imitation; since these things are not enjoined in the Gospel of Christ, and no such custom was ever found in the primitive churches. Let those therefore, who chuse to observe such preparatory seasons, lay no more stress on them than in reason they ought, and never censure or despise their fellow christians who are of a different judgment; seeing their non-observance of such public preparatory exercises may proceed from conscientious motives, viz. a fear of acting, as if they were wise above what is written; or of being chargeable with superstition (as Dr. Doddridge observes) by seeming to set the Lord’s supper at a vast distance from all other ordinances; or lest they should be the means of giving young persons terrifying ideas of the sacrament, and discourage them from joining in it. *Here* let both parties bear in mind the apostolic direction. Rom. xiv. 2, 6.

Christ and Belial, contrary to the design of our christian vocation, and may prove destructive of church discipline, and indeed appears to be quite inconsistent with 1 Cor. v. 11. Our advice to such is, to prostrate themselves before God in private, confessing their sins, and earnestly imploring forgiveness and renewing grace thro' Jesus Christ, and to have no longer fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them; and then approach the sacred ordinance. And let me beseech you, first, to use all speed, for you are not only unfit for celebrating the Lord's supper, but must be sensible, that you are unfit for death; that was death to seize you the next minute (which is no impossible case) you would be plunged into a state not to be seriously thought of without horror.—Yet still, be it far from us to affirm, that none are to come to the table of the Lord except those, who have very few doubts of their being already sanctified, and pardoned. If any live so as not to discredit a christian profession, if they feel some desires after Christ, and the infinite blessings of salvation, if they are forming resolutions against every iniquity, and in favor of every divine precept, if they pray and strive to keep those resolutions, let them be no longer terrified from an attendance on the Lord's table thro' a misapplication of the words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 29.(c) but let them

(c) For the satisfaction of tender minds, we shall consider the whole passage—The Corinthians seem to have retained but a very imperfect idea of the directions formerly given them by St. Paul, concerning the manner in which the Lord's supper was to be celebrated, and the great design of it. Therefore, when they met together professedly to attend on this ordinance, they treated the Lord's supper as a *common meal*, and each person appears to have brought his own separate provision, which was the custom of the Greeks at their *social suppers*; and these Corinthians perhaps might think it sufficient to mingle a few thoughts of the *death of Christ* with their eating and drinking.—Whereas, christians were not to come to the Lord's table to satisfy *their hunger and thirst*, but only to partake of some *small portion* of the bread

them come, O let them come and publicly commemorate the death of their dear Redeemer, as a most powerful means to increase their good desires, and confirm their good resolutions.

Not merely *one*, but *several* considerations may be urged to prevail with the serious christian against delaying to become a guest at the Gospel-Feast. — The duty to which you are invited is plain and very express, Matt. xxvi. 26, 27.—'Tis no burdensome rite, but compliance with it is easy—yea, the command is

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bread and wine, ver. 22, 34, and on such an occasion, instead of providing every one for himself *different portions*, they were to eat of the *same loaf of bread*, in token of their being members of the same spiritual body, and of the love which should prevail among them, 1 Cor. x. 17. Neither were they to content themselves with *a few slight thoughts* of a suffering Redeemer, but to have their minds devoutly employed thro' *the whole service*, 1 Cor. xi. 24. Now then the Corinthians could not be said to *eat the Lord's supper*, ver. 20, tho' there had been nothing more in their conduct than we have already noticed. But it is evident, that they were even chargeable with *confusion, intemperance, and unkindness* one towards another; the rich providing plentifully for themselves, and sparing nothing of their abundance to the poor, ver. 21: So that they eat and drank *unworthily* in the most notorious manner,* and were eminently *guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*, i. e. of affronting Christ himself, by profaning that which is intended to represent his body and blood, ver. 27. And yet this heinous sin was by no means unpardonable. 'Tis true, the Apostle says, ver. 29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body*, or not eating the bread, &c. that is intended to represent Christ's death more reverently than common bread. But let it be observed, that the context shews beyond all manner of doubt, that the word translated *damnation* should have been rendered *judgment*, i. e. *temporal judgment*, ver. 30. *For this cause many are weak and sickly among*

* We might indeed be said to eat and drink *unworthily*, however outwardly decent in the act of communicating, if we eat the bread and drink the wine with minds *inattentive* to the great objects represented by them.—And do not they also eat and drink unworthily, who receive the sacrament to qualify themselves for some civil office, i. e. with a view to their temporal advantage, and not to their spiritual improvement?

pleasant; how truly pleasant to contemplate the stupendous condescension and love of our heavenly Father, and the Redeemer displayed towards the unworthy children of men.—'Tis an ordinance highly beneficial. Looking unto Jesus, melts the heart into deep sorrow for sin; gives strength to faith; enlivens the believer's hope; adds vigor and delight to obedience; raises the mind to heavenly realities; in a word, looking unto Jesus, is adapted to make all the christian graces *grow exceedingly* (d) therefore a neglect

among you, &c. Bodily diseases were inflicted on some of these christians, as a judgment for their unworthy communicating. The Apostle adds, ver. 32, *We are judged* or (as he immediately explains it) *we are corrected* that *we may not be condemned*; which plainly shews the judgments spoken of may be fatherly chastisements.—Now what is there in the case we have been considering, that should raise dread of the Lord's supper in the breasts of those who have a knowledge of the ordinance, approach it reverently, and aim to keep this sacred feast in sincerity and truth. 1 Cor. v. 8.—We acknowledge that unworthy receiving as any other sin does indeed expose us to condemnation, should God be extreme to mark it; but still, it no more excludes a person from mercy than irreverent behavior under any other ordinance does.—They who neglect the Lord's supper because liable to partake of it improperly, have equal reason for the neglect of all religious duties; and tho' christians chiefly fear the consequences of *communicating*, yet, to say the least, there is as much reason to fear the consequences of *neglecting to communicate*.—To conclude this note, eating and drinking unworthily (says Dr. GUYSE,) relates not to the unworthiness of the *persons* that come to the Lord's supper, but to their unworthy *manner* of receiving it; and plainly refers to the uncharitable and scandalous behavior of the Corinthians at the ordinance:—nay to remove discouragement still further from the mind of the humble christian, let it be remembered, that even the Corinthians were not forbid by St. Paul from coming to the Lord's supper again; on the contrary, 'twas still supposed to be their duty, and they were required to come to it in a serious and christian manner, ver. 28, 33, 34.—See on this subject DODDRIGE's Fam. Expof. Mr. TOLLER on the Lord's supper, &c.

(d) We here see the advantage of frequent communions, and the answer to the common objection against them.—The *advantage* (as we have shewn above) is, that these frequent communions tend to promote our progress in the christian life: The *objec-*

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a neglect of this sacred institution may deprive you of much edification, and present comfort, and also occasion distressing thoughts in a dying hour.---Many instances of this kind have been known.

As the subject we are discussing is of no small moment, I cannot forbear pursuing it further, and addressing myself in particular to youth,† i. e. to those young persons who are *sober-minded*, Titus ii. 6, and with an heart-felt concern are inquiring the way to the celestial Zion.---The Jewish Authors inform us, that at twelve or thirteen years old, the Jews made their first appearance at the passover; which may be also infered from Luke ii. 41. 42. Since this sacred festival nearly answers to the Lord's supper, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8, is not here an argument why you should give an early attendance on the christian passover?—Youth is the season of temptation: Now, when you are strongly pressed to omit duty, or commit sin, the recollection of your sacramental engagements may be found an admirable means, to vanquish the tempter.---This solemn profession of religion, this mark of your devotedness to the service of Christ will redound to your honor; render you more honorable than your brethren, 1 Chron. iv. 9, 10. We read of one, who abandoning the pleasures and splendor of his own court, retired and assumed the name of *Christodulus*, or *a servant of Christ*, accounting the glory of that name did outshine not only *that* of his other illustrious titles, but of the imperial diadem too.—By paying a regard to the command, the *dy-*
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tion against them is, that communions if frequent will lose their solemnity.—We should think it very odd reasoning should we hear men take up a resolution not to worship God all the week long in their families, or closets, to the end that the duties of God's worship may be the more solemn, when performed in his own House, and on his own day. Let us not therefore of choice take up with very rare communions, or where circumstances will admit of it be against having them more frequently.—The primitive christians communicated every Lord's day.—Mr. Grove

† See page 28, 243, &c.

ing command of Jesus, besides your own improvement in religion, your conduct (as hinted at before) may happily influence those of the same age, and such likewise as are more advanced in life: And may you not naturally suppose, that your presence at this holy ordinance will afford joy to the pious on Earth; yea, will give joy to the angels of God.

Ye hearts with youthful vigor warm,
In smiling crouds draw near,
And turn from every mortal charm,
A Savior's voice to hear.

Eternal wisdom has prepar'd
A soul reviving feast,
And bids your longing appetites
The rich provision taste.

All things are ready; come away,
Nor weak excuses frame,
Haste to your places at the feast,
And bless the Founder's name.

*A PRAYER to be used before partaking of the
Lord's Supper.*

O Thou all-holy, all-glorious, and all-good and gracious God—I am indeed less than the least of thy mercies; infinitely unworthy to go to the table of the Lord, and draw so near to thy sacred Majesty. Yet as thou hast been pleased to command me thus to do, I would not neglect so plain a duty, so great a privilege—O give me a spiritual appetite to the plentiful and choice provision of thine House. May I feel a most earnest desire to eat of the christian passover.—And when I am present at the holy ordinance, and have Christ as crucified set before mine eyes, may my heart be sincerely, and deeply affected. Whilst I behold Jesus sealing the truth
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of his testimony with his blood, may my faith be confirmed in him, as one whom the Father hath sent to save sinners. Viewing him as a perfect pattern of patience and forgiveness, and of every heavenly grace, may I partake of his image. And may the contemplation of Jesus as wounded for my transgressions, and bruised for mine iniquities, lead me to loathe, and carefully avoid every way of sin, and to practise, and delight in holiness.—O that the unfeigned language of my heart (when leaving the sacred table) may be—“*God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of my Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*—All which I humbly entreat thro’ the merits of Him, *who is the brightness of thy glory, and the express image of thy person; and who hath loved his people, and washed them from their sins in his own blood, and hath made them kings and priests unto God even his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

THANKSGIVING and PRAYER to be used in the closet after partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

O Almighty God, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth, from whom all creatures derive whatever excellencies or advantages they enjoy. I will rejoice in thy goodness, I will adore thee for thy manifold works.—Above all, I will magnify thy Name, in that thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son, but given him to be *the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.*—Blessed be God for my share in this highest expression of thy love and bounty.—O how infinitely indebted also am I to Jesus, the Captain of salvation, in *dying* that I might *live* in a state of true and immortal joy.—Having been permitted this day to sit down at the sacramental table, and to *eat of wisdom’s bread, and drink of the wine which she has mingled,* may I admire more
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than ever the wonders of redeeming grace.—May I approve myself a friend to the cross of Christ, by sacrificing the dearest lust, and love him fervently, *who loved me, and gave himself for me.* And may I have such a grateful sense of thy tender mercies displayed in Jesus, that it might be as my meat and drink to do the will of my heavenly Father.—The Lord kindle in my breast a bright and steady flame of love towards my fellow-christians; may I cheerfully communicate to the supply of their wants, and strive to promote peace and union among them. And may this be done in lively and joyful expectation of the Savior's second appearance.—Forgive, gracious God, what the eyes of thy spotless purity saw amiss in me, while waiting upon thee. O that the sufferings and death of Christ (which I have been commemorating) may atone for all my transgressions. Wherever I am, may I not forget that I have solemnly devoted myself afresh to thy service. God of all grace, help mine infirmities, preserve thy servant in every circumstance of danger, who desires to trust in thee.—Teach me to set an high value upon sacramental seasons, and constantly to improve by them; and in thy good time may I be called to celebrate *the marriage supper of the Lamb* in thy Temple above.—Assist every one who has professedly received Christ Jesus the Lord, to *walk in love.* And O that the Redeemer might take to himself his mighty power, and reign triumphantly through the Earth, that millions and millions may shout for joy, on account of his great salvation.—Graciously accept of me, and of all my poor attempts to serve thee, for thy mercies sake in and and thro' thy well-beloved Son, whom thou hast appointed to be the Savior, even of the chief of sinners. *Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.*

The PRAYER of a person in sickness.

THY Name, O Lord, endureth for ever; and thy memorial throughout all generations. Thou even thou art he who killeth, and maketh alive, who woundeth, and healeth, neither is there any that can deliver out of thine hands. Therefore, I come unto thee; O look down upon me in this season of distress, tho' my multiplied and aggravated sins have rendered me infinitely undeserving thy favorable notice, and exposed me to final condemnation and misery.—Blessed God, may it be in mercy to my soul, that I am now chastened of thee. May I learn such things by means of the present affliction, as may issue in my everlasting benefit.—Whilst thy stroke is upon me, keep me from repining at thy dealings, and enable me to be all patience and resignation to thy will. Yea, make me so sensible of thy kind designs, in this visitation, that I may not only be *contented*, but *thankful*. Thus may I be an instrument of greatly glorifying thee in the hour of adversity.—With submission to infinite wisdom, I beseech thee to rebuke the distemper, and cause the cup of affliction to pass away from me; and to this purpose direct to suitable means, and command a blessing upon them. And when restored to health, may I live all the day long in thy fear, and to thy praise.—Or if thou hast determined that this sickness shall be unto death; do thou thoroughly fit me for the solemn event. Forbid it Lord, that I should be called to appear before thine awful bar in an unpardoned and unholy condition. But, I importunately beseech thee, to cleanse me from my sins with the invaluable blood of Jesus, and array my soul in the beautiful garments of holiness. Vouchsafe me a comfortable passage out of time, and safely conduct me to the realms of everlasting light, love, and joy. And I entreat thee also, to follow my dear friends with thy gracious goodness, both in life, and at death.—With all sincerity
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and earnestness, I offer those requests unto thee (O most merciful Father) thro' Jesus my worthy Intercessor, who hath *the Keys of death, and of the unseen world.* Amen and Amen.

THANKSGIVING for recovery from sickness, or for deliverance from any trouble, or danger.

O My God and my Father: None can increase, none can lessen thine essential glories and excellencies. Thou art thine own Heaven, thine own happiness. How *pure and disinterested* is thy goodness and love! And O how *great* is thy goodness, how *rich and numberless* thy mercies towards the works of thine hands.—Whilst the inferior creatures are partaking of thy bounties, praised be God for the *distinguishing* temporal blessings thou art conferring on the human race. But far sublimer praises are due to thee, for sending thy dearly beloved Son to teach men the most weighty and ravishing truths, to redeem from the worst of enemies, and to make the posterity of Adam like the Angels in Heaven. O what inestimable benefits are these! and how surprising the grace which offers them to those, who have in innumerable instances overlooked and abused them!—Of this grace I am a partaker. On me, even on me, a worthless worm, thou hast bestowed thousands and thousands of invaluable favors.—Very lately thou hast peculiarly interposed on my behalf: Yes, O Lord, when the sorrows of death compassed me, thou didst redeem my life from destruction; thou didst send me effectual aid in the time of need; and 'tis owing to such help obtained of God, that I continue to this hour.—Surely it becomes me to be glad and joy in thee, my adorable Redeemer! I therefore earnestly implore, that the seasonable deliverance received may be so imprinted upon my mind, that I may *never forget, never slight, never misimprove it.* May the high praises of my God fill my heart,

heart, and employ my tongue thro' the remainder of my days.---May every power of my nature, and all my talents be joyfully consecrated to thee; when my voice is expiring in death, may I still attempt thy praises. And O may I reach the celestial Canaan, and resound the praises of my Maker and Savior with those myriads of pure and happy Beings, who stand around thy throne.----Let Heaven and Earth, let all the creation unite in the most exalted and everlasting strains of blessing and praise.----Thus would I *give thanks always for all things unto God even the Father, in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, who came into the world that sinners might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.* Amen.

CHAPTER VI.

ON SINGING THE DIVINE PRAISES.

THIS sacred exercise is enforced by various scriptural precepts, and examples, 1 Chron. xvi. 23. 2 Chron. v. 12; and among others *that* of our divine Lord, Matt. xxvi. 30. “ ’Tis the noblest and highest employment of the soul, wherein we make the nearest approach to the blessed inhabitants of the heavenly world,” Psalm l. 23. Rev. v. 9.—When we perform this duty, we should closely attend to *the signification and importance* of what we sing, Psalm xlvii. 7. And the person who fixes upon the hymn, or psalm in social worship, should aim to chuse such as is easy to be understood, and in which serious christians of different sentiments may conscientiously join.----As *the understanding to the heart* is to be engaged in the service, Ephes. v. 19. If we utter a devout breathing after any spiritual good thing, un-
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less our desires go with the words, are we not uttering *a falsehood and mocking God*?—We should discharge the duty with *suitable affections*: When celebrating the inconceivable perfections of Jehovah, we should do it with the deepest reverence, Rev. iv. 10, 11, and whilst recounting the numerous and great benefits which flow from the divine loving-kindness, glowing gratitude should fire our spirits, and holy joy (*a*) accompany the song of praise, Psalm xcv. 2.----Since *the harmony of the voice* is an help to the devotion of the mind, those who are capable of it should learn to sing, 2 Chron. xxiii. 13. And those who have but an indifferent ear for music should be careful not to interrupt the melody; “particularly they should not run into an unseemly noisiness; nor begin before the rest; nor drawl out notes to a tedious length, when the rest have done.”—Respecting *the posture of the body* in singing, some think *standing* most suitable, 1 Chron. xxiii. 30. whilst others consider *sitting* (*b*) as not improper.—We would further observe that this is a duty not to be confin’d to a *few* but to be perform’d by *all*, (*c*)
 Psalm

(*a*) “There seems to be a glaring impropriety in singing penitential and mournful psalms and hymns, containing confessions of sin, humiliation and sorrow before God, prayers for pardon, and complaints under afflictions. St. James evidently prescribes a contrary practice. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry, or cheerful? let him sing psalms.* Chap. v. 13.—It appears from the history of the Old Testament, that the only psalms used in the service of the Jewish tabernacle, and temple were the language of praise and thanksgiving.”

(*b*) A certain person on this point expresses himself thus—Singing is an ordinance wherein we speak *concerning* God, rather than *to* him; accordingly it is called *a publishing the name of the Lord*, Deut. xxxii. 3. *A teaching and admonishing one another*, Colos. iii. 16. Hence the practice in our several congregations of sitting.—Hence also we see the mistake of those, who affirm that all we sing must be applicable to ourselves.

(*c*) Here some devout christians object, that in the churches to which they belong, the professed singers have introduced such a large variety of tunes, and are frequently introducing new ones, and some of them so full of *repetitions and flourishes*, that
 it

Pſalm lxviii. 22. Pſal. cl. 6, and as before intimated, every one ſhould be ſollicitous to perform it *in the beſt manner*, remembering that the moſt glorious praiſes we can give God are incomparably ſhort of what is due to his infinite perfections.—Should a little emmet (ſays Dr. WATTS) that feels the Sun-beams lift up its head and ſay, “ O Sun thou art warm ” a creeping inſect that knows little or nothing of the nature, the glory, the vaſt circumference, and the wonderful properties of this prodigious world of fire: Yet this deſpicable emmet gives praiſe to the Sun, much more than we can do to our God, much more than angels can do, more than all created nature can do; becauſe there is ſome proportion between the praiſes of this creeping worm, and the glories of the Sun; they are both finite: But the glories of our God are infinite; therefore no creative praiſe bears any proportion. ’Tis only the voice that built the Heavens and the Earth can tell what God *is*, and what God has *done*, and that can pay him *ſufficient praiſe*.

MORN-

it is impoſſible for them to learn them; ſo that they cannot join as they would wiſh to do in this part of worſhip.—The ingenious Dr. GREGORY hath obſerved, that *ſimplicity* in melody is abſolutely neceſſary in all muſic intended to reach the heart.—See Mr. ORTON, and The Morning Exerciſes on ſinging the praiſes of God.

☞ Let me remind *fingers* of the apprehended evil of learning to ſing after divine ſervice on a Lord’s day. Does not this break in upon the time which ſhould be employ’d in ſecret meditation? And does not the converſation which generally takes place on thoſe occasions tend to wear off any ſerious impreſſions which might have been made on the mind by the ſermon juſt preached? —Would likewiſe adviſe ſuch when they meet together on common days, to improve in ſinging—as their minds are peculiarly taken up with the tune, not to uſe words *very devotional*, but rather to uſe pſalms on ſome *moral virtue*, as *juſtice*, *kindneſs*, *meekneſs*, &c.—Neither can I forbear mentioning a word to thoſe, who at a particular ſeaſon of the year go about from houſe to houſe *drinking*, and *ſinging*. There is ſomething very ſhocking in the idea of perſons in the miſt of their intemperance engaging in anthems of praiſe.—And are not thoſe partakers of the ſin, who countenance the practice?

MORNING AND EVENING HYMNS,
EQUALLY SUITABLE FOR THE FAMI-
LY AND THE CLOSET.*

FOR THE LORD'S DAY MORNING.—Long Metre. 1.

The excellency of the Word.

1. **W**HEN Israel through the desert pass'd,
A fiery pillar went before,
To guide them through the dreary waste,
And lessen the fatigues they bore.
2. Such is thy glorious Word, O God,
'Tis for our light and guidance giv'n;
It sheds a lustre all abroad,
And points the path to bliss and Heav'n.
3. It fills the soul with sweet delight,
And quickens its inactive pow'rs,
It sets our wand'ring footsteps right,
Displays thy love; and kindles ours.
4. Its promises rejoice the heart,
Its doctrines are divinely true;
Knowledge and pleasure it imparts,
It comforts, and instructs us too.
5. Ye British Isles bless'd with this Word,
Ye saints who feel its saving pow'r,
Unite your tongues to praise the Lord,
And his distinguish'd grace adore.

THE LORD'S DAY MORNING.—Common Metre. 2.

1. **T**HIS is the Day the Lord hath made,
He calls it all his own;
Let Heav'n rejoice, let Earth be glad,
And praise surround the Throne.
2. To-day he rose and left the dead,
And Satan's Empire fell;
To-day the saints his triumphs spread,
And all his wonders tell.

* See page 168 note (c).

3. Hosanna to th' anointed King,
To David's holy Son !
Help us, O Lord ; descend and bring
Salvation from thy throne.
4. Hosanna in the highest strains
The church on Earth can raise ;
The highest Heav'ns in which he reigns,
Shall give him nobler praise.

W.

LORD'S DAY EVENING.—Long Meas. 3.

1. SWEET is the work, my God, my King,
To praise thy name, give thanks and sing ;
To shew thy love by morning-light,
And talk of all thy truth at night.
2. My heart shall triumph in the Lord,
And bless his works, and bless his word ;
Thy works of grace how bright they shine !
How deep thy counsels ! how divine !
3. Lo ! I shall share a glorious part,
When grace hath well refin'd my heart,
And fresh supplies of joy are shed
Like holy oil to cheer my head.
4. Then shall I see, and hear, and know
All I desir'd, or wish'd below ;
And every pow'r find sweet employ.
In that eternal world of joy.

W.

LORD'S DAY EVENING.—Common Metre. 4.

1. FREQUENT the day of God returns
To shed its quickening beams ;
And yet how slow devotion burns !
How languid are its flames !
2. Increase, O Lord, my faith and hope,
And fit me to ascend,
Where the Assembly ne'er breaks up,
The Sabbath ne'er shall end.
3. Where I shall breathe in heavenly air,
With heavenly lustre shine ;
Before the throne of God appear,
And feast on love divine.

4. Where I, in high seraphic strains,
 Shall all my powers employ;
 Delighted range th' etherial plains,
 And take my fill of joy. B.

A MORNING HYMN.—Long Meaf. 5.

1. **G**OD of the morning at whose voice
 The cheerful Sun makes haste to rise,
 And like a giant doth rejoice
 To run his journey thro' the skies;
2. From the fair chambers of the East
 The circuit of his race begins,
 And without weariness or rest,
 Round the whole Earth he flies and shines:
3. Oh like the Sun may I fulfil
 Th' appointed duties of the day,
 With ready mind and active will
 March on, and keep the heav'nly way.
4. Give me thy counsel for my guide,
 And then receive me to thy blifs;
 May each desire and hope beside
 Be faint and cold compar'd with this. W.

A MORNING HYMN.—Common Meaf. 6.

1. **O**NCE more my soul the rising day
 Salutes thy waking eyes;
 Once more my voice thy tribute pay
 To him that rules the skies.
2. Night unto night his name repeats,
 The day renews the sound,
 Wide as the Heavens on which he sits,
 To turn the seasons round.
3. 'Tis He supports my mortal frame,
 My tongue shall speak his praise;
 My sins would rouse his wrath to flame,
 And yet his wrath delays.
4. Great God, O let my heart be thine,
 Whilst I enjoy the light;
 Then shall my Sun in smiles decline,
 And bring a peaceful night. W.

AN EVENING HYMN.—Long Meas. 7.

1. SLEEP, downy sleep, come close mine eyes,
Tir'd with beholding vanities :
Welcome sweet sleep, that drives away
The toils, and follies of the day.
2. On thy soft bosom will I lie,
Forget the world and learn to die.
O Israel's watchful Shepherd spread
Thine Angel-tents around my bed.
3. Clouds and thick darkness veil thy throne,
Its awful glories all unknown;
O dart from thence one cheering ray,
And turn my mid-night into day.
4. Thus when the morn in crimson dress'd,
Breaks from the chambers of the East,
My grateful songs of praise shall rise,
Like fragrant incense to the skies.

F.

AN EVENING HYMN.—Common Metre. 8.

1. O Lord, my God, how wond'rous great
Is thine exalted Name !
The glories of the heav'nly state
Let men and babes proclaim.
2. When I behold thy works on high,
The Moon that rules the night,
And stars that well adorn the sky,
Those moving worlds of light.
3. Lord, what is man, or all his race,
Who dwells so far below,
That thou should'st visit him with grace
And love his nature so ?
4. That thy beloved Son should bear
Like me a mortal form,
Made lower than the Angels are,
To save a dying worm ?
5. Let him be crown'd with majesty
Who bow'd his head to death ;
And be his honors founded high
By all things that have breath.

W.

A MORNING OR EVENING HYMN.

Common Metre. 9.

1. **H**OSANNA with a cheerful sound,
To God's upholding hand;
Ten thousand shares attend me round,
And yet secure I stand.
2. That was a most amazing pow'r
That rais'd me with a word,
And ev'ry day, and ev'ry hour,
I lean upon the Lord.
3. My breath is forfeited by sin
To God's most holy law;
I own thy Grace, immortal King,
In ev'ry gasp I draw.
4. God is my Sun, whose daily light
My joy and safety brings;
My feeble flesh lies safe at night
Beneath his shadowy wings.

W.

A MORNING OR EVENING HYMN.

Common Metre. 10.

1. **T**HRICE happy souls who born from Heav'n,
While yet they sojourn here,
Who all their days with God begin,
And spend them in his fear!
2. So may mine eyes with holy zeal
Prevent the dawning day;
And turn the sacred Scriptures o'er
And praise thy name and pray.
3. Midst hourly cares may love present
Its incense to thy throne;
And while the world mine hands employs,
Mine heart be thine alone.
4. As sanctified to noblest ends
Be each refreshment sought;
And by each various providence
Some wise instruction brought.

5. When

5. When to laborious duties call'd,
Or by temptations try'd,
I'll seek the shelter of thy wings,
And in thy strength confide.
6. At night I lean my weary head
On thy paternal breast;
And safely folded in thine arms,
Resign my pow'rs to rest.

D.

A MORNING OR EVENING HYMN.

Common Metre. 11.

1. **S**HINE on my soul eternal God,
With rays of beauty shine :
O let thy favor crown my days,
And all their round be thine.
2. Did I not raise my hands to thee,
My hands might toil in vain ;
Small joy success itself could give,
If thou thy love restrain.
3. With thee let ev'ry week begin,
With thee each Day be spent,
For thee each fleeting hour improv'd,
Since each by thee is lent.
4. Thus cheer me thro' this desert road,
'Till all my labors cease ;
And Heav'n refresh my weary soul
With everlasting peace.

D.

A MORNING OR EVENING HYMN.

Long Metre. 12.

1. **M**Y God how endless is thy love !
Thy gifts are ev'ry evening new ;
And morning mercies from above
Gently distil like early dew.
2. Thou spread'st the curtains of the night,
Great Guardian of my sleeping hours ;
Thy sov'reign word restores the light,
And quickens all my drowsy pow'rs.

S. f.

3. I yield my powers to thy command;
 To thee I consecrate my days;
 Perpetual blessings from thine hand
 Demand perpetual songs of praise. W.

A MORNING OR EVENING HYMN.

Common Metre. 13.

1. **I**NDULGENT Father! how divine!
 How bright thy bounties are!
 Through Nature's ample round they shine,
 Thy goodness to declare,
2. But in the nobler work of grace,
 What sweeter mercy smiles,
 In my benign Redeemer's face,
 And ev'ry fear beguiles.
3. Such wonders, Lord! while I survey,
 To thee my thanks shall rise,
 When morning ushers in the day,
 Or ev'ning veils the skies.
4. When glimm'ring life resigns its flame,
 Thy praise shall tune my breath;
 The sweet remembrance of thy name
 Shall gild the shades of death.
5. But oh! how blest my song shall rise,
 When freed from feeble clay;
 And all thy glories meet mine eyes,
 In one eternal day.

A MORNING OR EVENING HYMN.

Common Metre. 14.

1. **T**HE glories of my Maker God
 My joyful tongue shall sing;
 And call the nations to adore
 Their Former and their King.
2. 'Twas his right hand that shap'd my clay,
 And wrought this wond'rous frame;
 But from his own celestial breath,
 My nobler spirit came.

3. I bring my mortal pow'rs to God,
And worship with my tongue;
I claim some kindred with the skies,
And join the heav'nly songs.
4. Let beasts which in the pastures feed,
Or in the deserts lie,
Fishes that move within the seas,
And fowls beneath the sky.
5. Let rocks, and woods, and fires, and seas,
Their various tribute bring;
And one united anthem raise
To God all nature's King.
6. Ye planets to his honor shine,
As thro' your orbs you run;
Praise him in your eternal course
Around the steady Sun.
7. The glory of my Maker's name
The wide creation fills,
And his unbounded grandeur flies
Beyond the heav'nly hills.

W.

A MORNING OR EVENING HYMN.

Long Metre. 15.

1. FATHER of men thy care we bless,
Which crowns our families with peace:
From thee they sprung, and by thy hand
Their root and branches are sustain'd.
2. To God most worthy to be prais'd,
Be our domestic altars rais'd;
Who Lord of Heav'n scorns not to dwell
With saints in their obscurest cell.
3. To thee may each united house,
Morning and night present its vows:
Our servants there, and rising race
Be taught thy précepts, and thy grace.
4. O may each future age proclaim
The honors of thy glorious name;
While pleas'd and thankful we remove
To join the family above.

† This and the next the reader will perceive are particularly adapted to family worship.

A MORNING OR EVENING HYMN.

Short Metre. 16.

1. **B**LEST are the sons of peace,
Whose hearts and hopes are one,
Whose kind designs to serve and please
Thro' all their actions run.
2. Blest is the pious house
Where zeal and friendship meet,
Their songs of praise, their mingled vows
Make their communion sweet.
3. Thus on the heav'nly hills
The saints are blest above,
Where joy like morning-dew distils
And all the air is love. W.

OCCASIONAL HYMNS.

FOR THOSE WHO PRACTISE INFANT BAPTISM.

Common Metre. 17.

1. **S**EE Israel's gentle Shepherd stand
With all-engaging charms,
Hark! how he calls the tender lambs,
And folds them in his arms.†
2. Permit them to approach, he cries,
Nor scorn their humble name,
For 'twas to bless such souls as these
The Lord of angels came.
3. We bring them Lord in thankful hands,
And yield them up to thee,
May we ourselves indeed be thine,
Thine let our off-spring be.
4. Ye little flock with pleasure hear,
Ye children seek his face,
And fly with transport to receive
The blessings of his grace. D.

† Mark x. 14. Luke xviii. 15, &c.

A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF ADULT BAPTISM.*

Common Metre. 18.

1. **A**TTEND ye children of your God;
 Ye heirs of glory hear;
 For accents so divine as these,
 Might charm the dullest ear.
2. Baptiz'd into your Savior's death,
 Your souls to sin must die;
 With Christ your Lord ye live anew,
 With Christ ascend on high.
3. Rise from these earthly trifles, rise
 On wings of faith and love;
 Your choicest, brightest treasure lies,
 And be your hearts, above.
4. But Earth and sin will drag us down
 When we attempt to fly;
 Lord, send thy strong attractive force
 To raise and fix us high.

D.

A SACRAMENTAL HYMN.---Com. Metre. 19.

1. **C**OME, let us join the rapturous songs
 Of angels round the throne;
 Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
 But all their joys are one.
2. "Worthy the Lamb that dy'd," they cry,
 "To be exalted thus,
 "Worthy the Lamb," our lips reply,
 For he was slain for us.
3. The whole creation join in one
 To bless the sacred name
 Of Him that sits upon the throne,
 And to adore the Lamb.

W.

A SACRAMENTAL HYMN.---Com. Metre. 20.

1. **S**ALVATION! O melodious sound
 To wretched dying men!
 Salvation, which from God proceeds,
 And leads to God again!

* Colos. iii. 1.

2. Rescu'd from Hell's eternal gloom,
And sin's most hateful chain :
Rais'd to a paradise of blifs,
Where love and glory reign !
3. But O ! may a degen'rate soul,
Sinful and weak as mine,
Presume to raise a trembling eye
To blessings so divine ?
4. The lustre of so bright a blifs
My feeble heart o'er-bears ;
And unbelief almost perverts
The promise into tears.
5. O Lord, my God, no voice but thine
These languid hopes can raise :
Speak thy salvation to my soul,
And turn its doubts to praise.
6. O Lord, my God, this broken voice
Transported shall proclaim,
And call on all th' angelic harps
To sound thy gracious name. D.

PRAISE FOR DELIVERANCE FROM SICKNESS.

Long Metre. 21.

1. I Will extol thee, Lord, on high,
At thy command diseases fly ;
Who but a God can speak, and save
From the dark borders of the grave ?
2. Sing to the Lord, ye saints of his,
And tell how large his goodness is ;
Let all your pow'rs rejoice and bless
While you record his holiness.
3. His anger but a moment stays ;
His love is life and length of days ;
Tho' grief and tears the night employ,
The morning-star restores the joy. W.

A HYMN FOR NEW-YEAR'S-DAY.---L. Metre. 22.

1. **E**TERNAL God, I bless thy name;
The same thy power, thy grace the same;
The tokens of thy friendly care
Open, and crown, and close the year.
2. I 'midst ten thousand dangers stand,
Supported by thy guardian hand;
And see, when I survey thy ways
Ten thousand monuments of praise.
3. Thus far thy arm has led me on;
Thus far I make thy mercy known;
And while I tread this desert land,
New mercies shall new songs demand.
4. My grateful songs on Jordan's shore,
Shall raise one sacred pillar more;
Then bear, in thy bright courts above
Inscriptions* of immortal love.

A HYMN FOR THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER.

Long Metre. 23.

1. **H**AD not the Lord, may Isr'el say,
Had not the Lord maintain'd our side,
When men, to make our lives a prey,
Rose like the swelling of the tide.
2. The swelling tide had stopt our breath,
So fiercely did the waters roll,
We had been swallow'd deep in death;
Proud waters had o'er-whelm'd our soul.
3. For ever blessed be the Lord,
Who broke the fowler's deadly snare,
Who sav'd us from the murd'ring sword,
And made our lives and souls his care!
4. Our help is in Jehovah's Name,
Who form'd the Earth and built the Skies;
He who upholds that wond'rous frame;
Guards his own church with watchful eyes.

* Rev. iii. 12.

THE HAPPY NATION.---Long Metre. 24.

1. **H**APPY the city where their sons
 Like pillars round a palace set,
 And daughters bright as polish'd stones
 Give strength and beauty to the state.
2. Happy the country where the sheep,
 Cattle, and corn have large increase;
 Where men securely work or sleep,
 Nor sons of plunder break the peace.
3. Happy the nation thus endow'd ;
 But more divinely blest are those
 On whom the all-sufficient God
 Himself with all his grace bestows.

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